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'The world is in chaos... something remarkable has to come from his death'

Head's widow appeals for moral revival

By JOANNA BAILE

THE widow of the murdered headmaster Philip Lawrence called yesterday for a public debate to work out how to rid society of violence and establish new moral codes, especially among young people.

Frances Lawrence said that in launching her campaign she would be carrying out her husband's wishes. "This was something that Philip and I talked about long before he died. That we had got to a point where the whole world was in a state of chaos and something needed to be done."

"We talked about it endlessly. At his death I just knew that I couldn't leave this unremarkable man and something remarkable had to come from his death as much as from his life."

Mrs Lawrence was speaking in an interview with *The Times* in which she told of the nightmare she had lived since 16-year-old Leoro Chindamo stabbed her husband outside his London school last December. She said she wanted to see young people like Chindamo given values and something to shape their lives, and her manifesto for a new morality will be published in *The Times* on Monday.

Mr Lawrence earned a reputation as an inspirational teacher and headmaster and was credited with having transformed the standards of St George's comprehensive school in Maida Vale in the two years he was there.

Mrs Lawrence said: "To me, Philip was a giant among men. He always wanted to challenge and I think he felt that perhaps young people today feel unchallenged and undervalued. It's only when you are challenged and therefore achieve something that life becomes worth living."

She now hopes to establish a forum for debate after receiving more than 5,000 letters from people who have echoed her thoughts in wanting a better world for their children to grow up in.

She said her husband's death had brought home to many the ills of society and its downward spiral towards increasing violence and rampant materialism. But their family had already been concerned about the way children's lives were being blighted by violence. She said: "It was a 12-year-old girl stabbed in her classroom that really devastated Philip. The destruction of society is very obvious and we see it all the time in newspaper reports, but this incident really stood out."

Nikki Conroy was stabbed at Hallgarth School in Middlesbrough in 1994 by Stephen Wilkinson, a psychopath who burst into her classroom wear-

ing combat gear and carrying a gun and two knives. He ordered people to kneel facing a wall and stabbed Nikki because she could not stop crying.

Mrs Lawrence has had letters from Nikki's parents and from other victims of violence. She said: "It has really been overwhelming. Each one makes its own points and I would like to respond to all of them, but it would take me years."

"Instead, I would like people to start to debate in a very public way about what can be done. Education is obviously one of the central issues in this. I can't change what has happened. I can't bring Philip back. Our task now is to aim for growth. I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I think that something needs to be done before it is too late."

Children needed to be encouraged to think rather than to follow blindly. "Philip's killer was a leader of a Triad group, which is a very good example of what I mean by this. Not thinking for themselves which leads to horrendous consequences."

The nation is engaged in a process of reduction of values and principles. Thinking almost seems to be out of the equation."

Sorrow for killer, page 3



Frances Lawrence in the garden of her home in Ealing, west London, yesterday. Photograph: Gill Allen

Catholic Church heads for political minefield

By RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Roman Catholic Church is about to plunge into a political minefield with an unprecedented 13,000-word document outlining the principles of its social teaching.

The bishops in England and Wales want to explain the thinking behind the Church's teaching on social welfare, workers' rights, education and the morality of the market place. Although the authors deny trying to tell Britain's five million Catholics how to vote in the general election, they are asking churchgoers to bear in mind the Church's teaching when they go to cast their ballot.

The exercise will be viewed with interest by all the political parties, and perhaps with some concern by the Conservatives. Although the Catholic Church has been traditionally conservative in its outlook, its teaching has been more in tune with old-style Tory paternalism predating the present Government and Tony Blair's kind of social democracy.

The idea of community is at the heart of the Church's instruction and the philosophy of Mr Blair's New Labour. Were the document to be seen to be leaning towards Labour there would be an outcry within the Church as well as outside.

The document, *The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching*, to be published on Monday, will outline the Church's teaching over the past 100 years. The bishops believe that Catholic social teaching and the moral principles and values it puts forward "have never been Continued on page 2, col 5

Youth held after slab hits motorist

A 16-year-old youth was arrested last night after a motorist was critically injured when a 50lb concrete block thrown from a bridge over the M3 in Hampshire smashed through his windscreen and hit him on the head.

Simon Willmott, 22, of Bagshot, Surrey, was driving at 70 mph. He blacked out but managed to stop the car and was in intensive care at Frimley Park Hospital, Camberley. Page 5

Henman victory

Tim Henman, of Britain, beat Wayne Ferreira, the South African ranked seventh in the world, to reach the semi-final of the Czech Indoor Tournament. He served powerfully and deep with ten aces and displayed a panoply of ground strokes. Page 52

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WEATHER 26
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COURT & SOCIAL 24

Court battle to cut the cost of popular pills and potions

By DOMINIC KENNEDY, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

POPULAR over-the-counter medicines could become cheaper if the Office of Fair Trading succeeds in an attempt to outlaw price-fixing by drug companies.

John Bridgeman, the director general, is applying to a court to recommend the abolition of a 26-year-old agreement which sets a minimum price for 2,273 brands of vitamins, syrups, tablets, lozenges and ointments.

Supporters of retail price maintenance say that a quarter of Britain's 10,000 neighbourhood pharmacies might close if supermarkets are allowed to sell brands such as Lemsip, Rennie and Nurofen more cheaply. But Mr Bridgeman accused them of scaremongering and of exaggerating the number of chemists at risk.

Even pharmacists accepted

that an end to price-fixing could save consumers £180 million a year, he said. "Retailers who want to compete on price or offer special discounts to pensioners are unable to do so because they are forced by manufacturers and suppliers to sell at a fixed price."

The position of local chemists had changed greatly since 1970 when price-fixing was introduced: the number of community chemists was then declining, now it was stable, and they now relied more on over-the-counter products.

"I am convinced that it is time for the Restrictive Prac-

ices Court to look at this again and decide whether RPM is in the public interest." A preliminary hearing is expected next spring, but a full hearing is unlikely before 1998.

The Office of Fair Trading began its review after Asda, which helped to destroy the Net Book Agreement by cutting the price of hardbacks — cut the cost of 82 vitamin and health supplements.

If the Restrictive Practices Court agrees to forbid price fixing, shoppers can expect to see the price of some brands halved. But the Community Pharmacy Action Group says it will fight "all the way".

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Paradol (24 pack) 1.75 24p
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Seven Seas Cod Liver Oil One a day (60) 3.59 £1.79
Rennie (48) 1.99 99p
Strepasil (24) 1.79 89p
Nurofen (12) 1.39 89p
Aradin Extra (24) 2.22 89p

Top general sacked in Yeltsin purge

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT YELTSIN yesterday continued his purge of senior military figures when he removed Russia's highest ranking officer from his post.

The Defence Ministry said that General Mikhail Kolesnikov, Chief of the Russian General Staff and First Deputy Defence Minister, was relieved of his duties and assigned to the largely ceremonial job of chief of staff of the Commonwealth of Independent States, a non-existent force. He will be replaced by General Viktor Samsonov, who was formerly responsible for cooperation with former Soviet republics.

Although Kremlin aides last night were at pains to dissociate the move from the dismissal of General Aleksandr Lebed, the former National Security Adviser, the timing was not coincidental. The

main reason for General Lebed's sacking was the growing fear in the Yeltsin administration that the demoralised and disgruntled military could rebel because of the disintegration of the armed forces due to lack of funding.

On Thursday the daily *Nevskiy Vostok* published an open letter by officers serving at the General Staff, under General Kolesnikov's command, threatening to take action against Kremlin leaders if their salaries dating back to August were not paid by October 25.

On the same day the deputy commander of the country's airborne forces was dismissed after criticising plans by the Ministry of Defence to reduce the number of paratroops in the army.

Military unrest, pages 14, 15

Black Friday on the roads as holiday grinds into gear

By RUSSELL JENKINS

THE RAC called yesterday Black Friday as Britain's motorway network suffered some of the worst congestion of the year.

Motorists were anxious to start the weekend early or get away at the beginning of the school half-term holidays, and by the evening rush hour up to half a million vehicles were clogging motorways and major trunk roads at speeds of under 30mph.

Black Friday followed a warning

from the RAC that the Government's own medium-term forecasts show that many of the built-up areas of Britain will, by 2015, suffer gridlock during working hours.

Britain was hit yesterday by successive bands of driving rain sweeping across the country. Today will start off dry and bright but showers are forecast for Scotland and the North later.

The RAC released the Department of Transport's own "stress" maps which show how congestion is likely to grow

over the next nine years. They have been described by the RAC as a nightmare vision of the future. By 2015, the Government's own forecast suggests, every major route out of London will be subject to severe congestion through most of the working day. Congestion will have extended to most of the Midlands and "key strategic routes to the North". By 2025 one third of the motorway and trunk roads will suffer chronic congestion, the RAC says.

In financial terms, it is estimated

that congestion costs the UK economy around £19 billion each year. Using the stress maps, the motoring organisation forecasts that costs will escalate disproportionately to around £40 billion within ten years.

It is estimated that motorists already spend five working days each year caught in traffic jams with a consequent knock-on effect on the economy. This is forecast to rise to two working weeks.

Forecast, page 26

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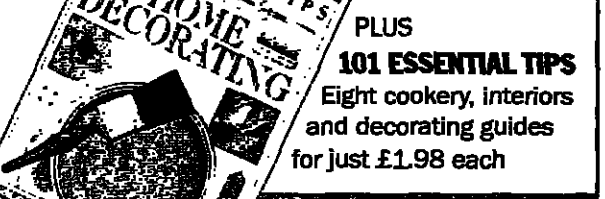
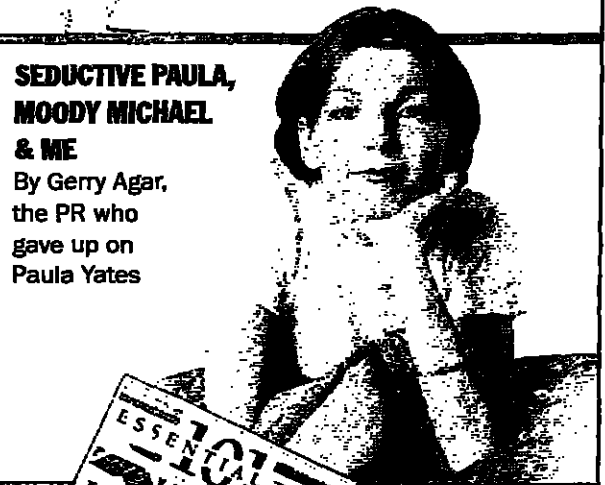
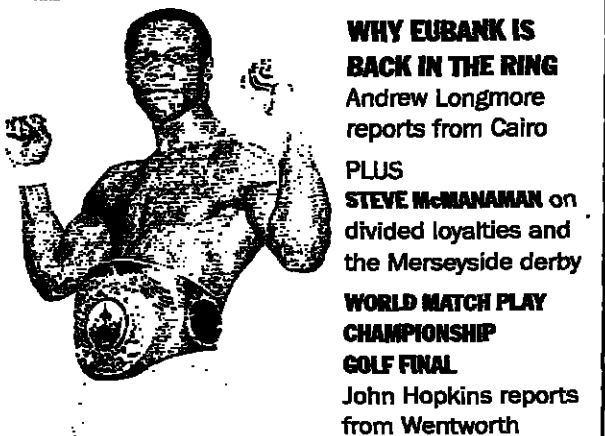
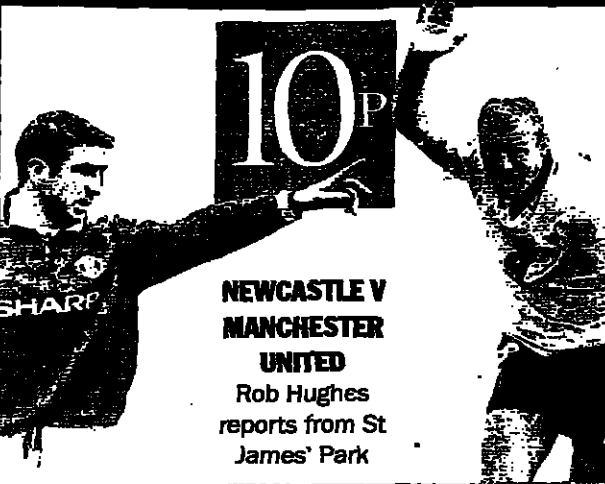
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£10,000 raised for woman in sperm case

Public rallies behind widow who wants baby

By Emma Wilkins and Alice Thomson

DIANE BLOOD, the widow who is fighting for the right to bear her late husband's baby, said yesterday she had been overwhelmed by donations and messages of support from the public.

An appeal for money towards Mrs Blood's legal costs raised more than £10,000 by last night with donations from all over Great Britain and one from Switzerland. But Mrs Blood, 30, needs more than £100,000 to cover the costs of an appeal against a High Court ruling which bans her from using her husband Stephen's sperm to conceive by artificial insemination.

"I am getting tremendous support from the public and I want to thank everyone for the amazing response," Mrs Blood said. "I would just like people to help me because I am being stopped from having Stephen's baby by bureaucracy and red tape."

Mr Blood, who died aged 30 in March last year from bacterial meningitis, would have made a wonderful father, she said.

"He was brilliant with children. He loved spending time with his nephews and our friends' children, playing football, giving piggyback rides and messing about."

"The reason that I fell in love with him was for his wonderful personality. I've never known anyone who had so many friends. No one disliked him. He was the most open, friendly and loving person. He would have been a wonderful father."

The couple, who lived in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, first met as teenagers at a friend's party. Stephen was her first boyfriend and they went out together for nine years before getting married in 1991.

"Marriage was the logical conclusion of our relationship. He proposed when we were in the garden at my parents' house and he asked me if I would like to marry him the next year."

"It was always our plan to start a family and we had



Diane Blood: overwhelmed by money for legal costs and messages of support for her

discussed it before we got married. We both agreed it was something we wanted. We wouldn't have formed a relationship if we thought differently about something so fundamental," she said.

The High Court ruled on Thursday that Mrs Blood had

lawfully been denied the use of her husband's sperm by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority because he had not given his written consent before he died. Mrs Blood was granted leave to appeal and the case will probably not be heard before

January next year. A powerful cross-bench alliance of Peers is considering introducing a backbench Bill which would allow widows such as Diane Blood to have children by their dead husbands. The Peers, led by fertility experts Lord Winston and Baroness Warnock, say that if Mrs Blood does not win her appeal then they want to act to change the "flawed" laws on human fertilisation.

Lord Winston, who was made a Labour Peer a year ago, said: "The consequences of the law are not only unjust but also morally wrong. Mrs Blood can use the sperm from a complete stranger but not her late husband."

Lord Winston, Professor of Fertility Studies at Westminster Hospital, yesterday said that Mrs Blood's case was by no means unique and it was unfair to prevent a husband and wife having a child after one spouse's death. He said: "The most obvious way to change the Bill would be to add 'normally' before the words requiring 'written consent'."

Lord Winston said that he had been involved in at least one other recent case where a couple had been having fertility treatment and the husband had then gone into a coma after an accident. Mrs Blood could legally receive Mr Blood's kidneys, liver or cornea but not the child he wanted her to bear. Ironically she could be legally inseminated with sperm from a complete stranger, live or dead as long as there is written permission," Lord Winston said.

Joan Lester, the former Labour Cabinet minister, is prepared to help take the Bill through the Commons. Peers are usually allowed a free vote on private members' bills but some rightwing Tory Peers have already made it known to the whips that they would not back any law that encouraged a child to be bought up in a one-parent family. Catholic Peers are also likely to feel strongly about any changes to the Bill which most already oppose.

Donations can be made to The Stephen Blood Baby Appeal on 0121 643 4636.

Loyalist terrorists keep their side of ceasefire

Loyalist terrorists yesterday told David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionists, that they would continue to support their ceasefire, despite the upsurge in IRA violence. But in their talks with him at the Maze Prison, Belfast, prisoners from the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force said that the Government must crack down on the IRA.

In a separate attempt to maintain Ulster's threatened search for peace, John Hume, leader of the SDLP, called on nationalists to cancel a protest against a contentious parade by 200 loyalists in Londonderry this morning. A small amount of Semtex, bomb-making equipment, firearms and ammunition were found during a police and army search near Hackballcross, Co Louth, near the border with Ulster.

Soldier killed by IRA is cremated

Warrant Officer James Bradwell, who was killed in the IRA car bombings at Lisburn, Co Antrim, was given full military honours at his funeral at Sunderland Crematorium. His coffin, draped in the Union Flag, was carried by members of his regiment, who had travelled from Germany. WO 1 Bradwell was married with three children.

Credit card spending hits record

Credit and debit card spending hit record levels last month, indicating that consumer confidence has returned, according to researchers. Consumers spent £7.3 billion with cards, a jump of more than 31 per cent on September 1995, the Credit Card Research Group said. Recent months have seen a flood of new cards being issued.

Writer challenges Bormann book

The writer Ian Sayer has taken up an offer by the literary agents Curtis Brown of a £20,000 "reward" for anyone who could disprove the claim of John Ainsworth-Davis in his book *Operation James Bond* that the leading Nazi Martin Bormann was brought to Britain. Sayer said the book had 120 inaccuracies. Curtis Brown could not comment.

Teenager shot pastor with air rifle

A teenager who wounded a Baptist pastor outside his church with an air rifle bought by mail order was placed under a 12-month supervision order at the Old Bailey. The 22-year-old would still be legal under proposed changes to the firearms laws. The judge lifted an order banning identification of Adam Hill, 16, of Peckham, south London.

Suicide man challenges publicity

A man whose suicide attempt was filmed on closed circuit television has won leave to seek a judicial review over a decision by Brentwood council, Essex, to release the film to Anglia TV and BBC's *Crime Beat*. Geoffrey Peck, 42, tried to cut his wrists in Brentwood High Street after learning that his girlfriend was seriously ill.

Tesco removes Hallowe'en display

Tesco has withdrawn a Hallowe'en display from its Dorchester store after a local Baptist couple claimed it was "grossly sinister". The display included devil masks, skulls, candles and an altar. A Tesco spokesman said: "We were really surprised... considering it was all in the spirit of Hallowe'en, which is very popular with children."

Father jailed for crippling student

A father who attacked his daughter because he disapproved of a boyfriend was jailed for six years at Isleworth Crown Court, west London. Revinder Chera, 19, who was a business student at Glamorgan University, is now brain damaged and in a wheelchair. Jarnail Singh Chera, 44, of Hayes, denied intending to cause grievous bodily harm.

Insurance boss cleared of sex bias

An insurance manager was cleared of hounding a female consultant who claimed that she forced him to leave her job. An industrial tribunal ruled Stewart Calderwood, of Bingham, Nottinghamshire, had not sexually discriminated against Melanie Murphy, who said she had been driven to a nervous breakdown by his intimidation and bullying.

Dorrell move on children's homes

Inspectors are to be allowed into smaller residential homes caring for children. Stephen Dorrell announced yesterday. The Health Secretary is closing a loophole in the law which exempted institutions with fewer than four children from the inspection regime. His announcement was made at the Association of Directors of Social Services' conference.

Dunblane parents may sue police

Dunblane parents may seek compensation from Central Scotland Police following Lord Cullen's damning criticism of the force and the subsequent resignation of a senior officer, Peter Watson, solicitor advocate representing all the families and the two surviving teachers, confirmed yesterday that he would be advising his clients.

RC 'minefield'

Continued from page 1

more relevant to the condition of contemporary society," according to the Right Rev David Konstant, Bishop of Leeds and chairman of the working group responsible for the document.

He is concerned to avoid "misrepresentations", he says. The Church has in the past been highly critical of the extremes of both socialism and capitalism and bishops are concerned that they are not seen as lending support to the Labour Party. While hardline Labour MPs have in the past tended to be atheists, that has changed over the past decade.

In a letter to the editors of all Catholic newspapers and journals, Bishop Konstant emphasises that the Church is not

being party political. "You are no doubt aware that the Catholic bishops' conference has drawn up a statement outlining the principles of Catholic social teaching and applying them to contemporary society in the light of the forthcoming general election. This is the first venture of its kind, likely to attract considerable media interest," he says.

In an unusual attempt to forestall controversy, he continues: "I am confident that fair and comprehensive coverage of this statement in the Catholic press will help to offer any misinterpretations the statement may receive elsewhere." Bishop Konstant insists: "Our primary aim is to remind and inform Catholics of the Church's teaching in this area."

Bowls club turns down lottery cash

By Robin Young

THE members of a predominantly male bowls club have turned down £80,000 in lottery and council grants because they do not want to use the club's reserves for a new clubhouse which might attract more women.

A National Lottery grant of £52,000 to Stalybridge Bowls Club, near Manchester, for the renovation of its crumbling clubhouse was announced by Sir Bobby Charlton in March after the club changed its rules to allow women as voting members. The club was also to receive grants from a brewery and from Tameside council, totalling more than £30,000, but would have been left with £33,000 to find if plans to provide a new bar, lounge and indoor green were to be realised.

After six months' indecision, the club decided to go without the money. Its secretary, Eric Saville, has resigned in disgust. He said: "We have been working for this for two years and now it has all gone. The clubhouse is 100 years old and crumbling around members' cars. I cannot believe their decision."

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'He not only destroyed my family, he destroyed his future. My heart goes out to him'

Head's widow feels sorrow for killer



Frances Lawrence yesterday with her children Maroushka, 21, left, Lucien, 9, Unity, 15, and Myfanwy, 19. They discussed the verdict together: "It has been like a rite of passage"

Frances Lawrence says she has been living a nightmare since her husband's death. She talks to Joanna Bale about the impact of the murder upon her family



SURROUNDED by photographs of her husband and four children, Philip Lawrence's widow spoke for the first time yesterday about the "nightmare" she feels that she has been living since his death.

Throughout the trial of her husband's killer, 16-year-old Learco Chindamo, Frances Lawrence maintained a dignified and composed presence at the back of the Old Bailey courtroom. Although the strain was revealed in an occasional haunted expression, her face betrayed little emotion, even when Chindamo was found guilty on Thursday of murder.

Mrs Lawrence said she had no hatred towards her husband's killer; instead she felt "overwhelming sadness" for him and his family. "Learco Chindamo killed my husband and, in doing so, he not only destroyed my family, he also destroyed his own future. My heart goes out to him and his family. I just feel overwhelming sadness that he has not known Philip."

"Philip might have given time and shown him a better way to live. He might have shown him that the meaning of happiness doesn't lie in the glitzy amusement arcades that he spent his time in."

"I felt a great sadness for him and his lack of values and the lack of anything that shaped his life. People say that some lives are beyond redemption, but I do not believe that. If I did I think I would just feel like giving up completely."

She said that the point at which she felt most pity for Chindamo was when he was giving evidence. "When Learco was in the witness box, he described the minute details of his gang and how it worked. When he was talking about how he paid £3,600 to join, it just broke my heart that



Philip Lawrence and his killer, Learco Chindamo. Philip might have shown him a better way to live

no experience of violence, which makes it particularly difficult to begin to tell him what it all means," Mrs Lawrence said. "I have told him everything, though. Children suffer if they are not told everything straight away and only find out afterwards."

Although Lucien is so young, he has taken a keen interest in his mother's attitude that some good could come out of his father's death. She said: "Lucien said to me this morning, 'We can't change what's happened in the past, but we can change the future'. That comes from a child who even at nine has that kind of vision."

She said that many of her friends tried to protect her from the gruesome details of her husband's death by trying to persuade her not to attend the trial. "Philip's death is as important to me as his life. I wanted to know all about it. Many people tried to dissuade me from going to court, but it seemed to me that my place was there."

"There was no decision to make in my mind about it. I had heard all the details of Philip's death before the trial. I had a long talk with his surgeon and I also saw his body after he died."

"Even so, the whole thing has had the kind of consistency of a nightmare that I feel I will never wake up from. The trial was like watching a play, but at the same time being totally immersed in the characters and the plot."

Asked how she managed to retain her composure while listening to some of the evidence about her husband's death, she said: "Some feelings are too deep for tears."

She never doubted that Chindamo was the killer and said that she felt a sense of justice when the guilty verdict was delivered. "There was no pleasure to see a young life

locked away, but there was a sense of justice. I knew the police had the right man."

After the verdict she telephoned her children and spoke to each one separately. "I told them as it was, almost in the way that the jury foreman had read out the verdicts on the three charges that were faced by Chindamo and his co-defendant. I then came home and we talked about it a little more. It has been like a rite of passage for all of us."

Mrs Lawrence is still having to live with the spectre of a

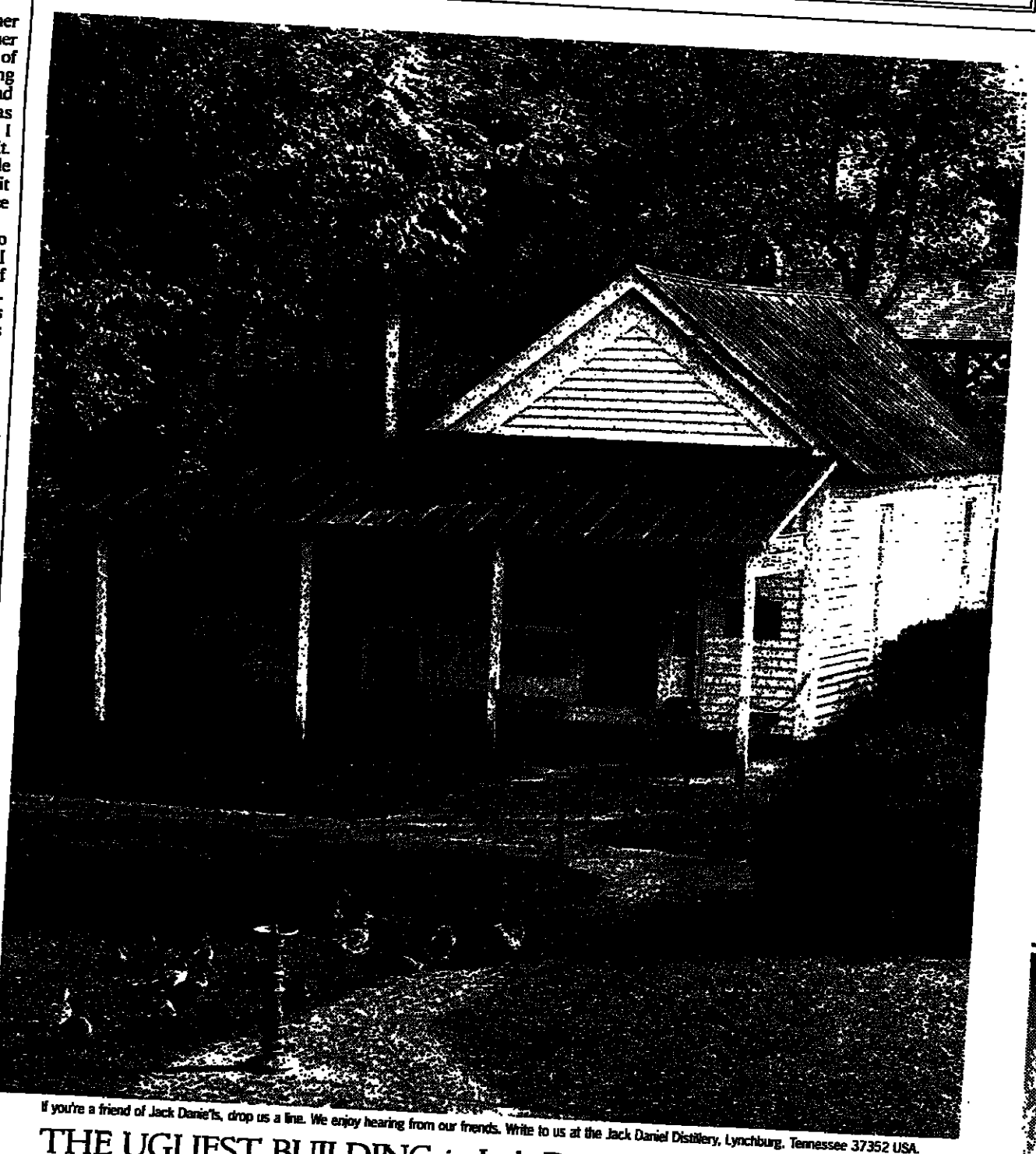
man who has been stalking her as she struggles to return to normality with her children. She said: "I am not terrified. It's just rather creepy and makes me feel uneasy. He has followed me to various places and I have seen him on several occasions. There have been no physical or verbal threats and the police are investigating."

She dismissed the incidents as unimportant compared to her husband's death. She added: "We are trying not to let it be a problem."

She plans to return next

term to teaching English at an independent school near her home in Ealing, west London. "I love teaching and I don't want to let my pupils down. I went back to school a few weeks after Philip died because I felt that it was the right thing to do."

"I hope that something can be done to stop society disintegrating the way it is. Both Philip and I discussed this before he died and I feel I should carry it on. He used to call us twin souls; we just knew that it was the right way to go about things."



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Woman loses in strippogram case

By A Staff Reporter

A WOMAN executive who claimed to have suffered post-traumatic stress disorder after colleagues at work arranged a male stripper on her birthday has lost her claim for unfair dismissal.

Gail Steele, 44, said she was shocked to have lost her claim against the optical care company Optika and was considering taking the case to appeal. She is already bringing a claim in the High Court next year for £320,000 damages, alleging wrongful dismissal, assault and false imprisonment by the stripper.

At the hearing earlier this year at Woburn Place industrial tribunal, central London, a psychiatrist said that Ms Steele had suffered emotional trauma similar to that suffered by the victims of rape or bomb blasts. The stripper arrived on her 43rd birthday and pretended to be a job applicant. When Ms Steele—who earned £60,000 as the only senior woman director with the company—sat down, he leaned over and handcuffed her wrists to the desk.

She said he produced a truncheon and baby oil and, as the all-male group jeered

Gascoigne saw red after row

By Shirley English

PAUL GASCOIGNE yesterday blamed his violent argument with his wife Sheryl for his performance on the football pitch during Rangers' clash with Ajax, when he was sent off for kicking another player.

In an oblique reference that appeared to confirm reports that they had had a fight, the England and Rangers midfielder said he had taken the "memory of Sunday night" on to the pitch with him on Wednesday night.

It has been alleged that Gascoigne attacked his wife during an argument while they were staying at the Gleneagles Hotel in Perthshire. Pictures of Mrs Gascoigne, with a bruised face, arm in a sling and bandaged hand, appeared in the *Daily Mirror* on Thursday.

Yesterday, Gascoigne, 28, returned alone to his home outside Glasgow, after training all day. It was not clear whether Mrs Gascoigne, 31, was also there. The recently married couple were said to have met on Thursday night, to try to salvage their five-year relationship.

Yesterday, Mel Stein, Gas-

Soccer, pages 50-52

TODAY IN THE TIMES

directory

Inside The Directory, our new 52-page entertainment guide:

- The best seven-day guide to television, satellite and radio PAGES 23-50
- Books: six pages of weekend reading PAGES 7-12
- Food: the low-fat cookery course PAGES 3-6
- What's on and where: our critics' guide to going out this week PAGES 13-22

Young motorist fights for life in hospital after his car is 'bombed' with 50lb block from bridge

Driver injured as vandals hurl concrete on motorway

By LIN JENKINS

A MOTORIST who was critically injured by a concrete block hurled from a motorway bridge was fighting for his life last night.

Simon Willmott was driving at 70mph when the 50lb block smashed through his windscreen, hit him on the head and crushed his chest. He managed to stop the car before he blacked out.

Police said a youth, or gang of youths, had thrown the block off the bridge over the M3 near Odham, Hampshire. The crime was being treated as attempted murder. Officers believe the same people could have been responsible for a number of similar incidents in recent weeks when missiles have been hurled off the bridge into the traffic below.

Mr Willmott, 22, of Bagshot, Surrey, was unconscious in intensive care at Frimley Park Hospital, Camberley. His condition was described as critical but stable and his parents Alan and Sandra Willmott and his girlfriend Laura were at his bedside.

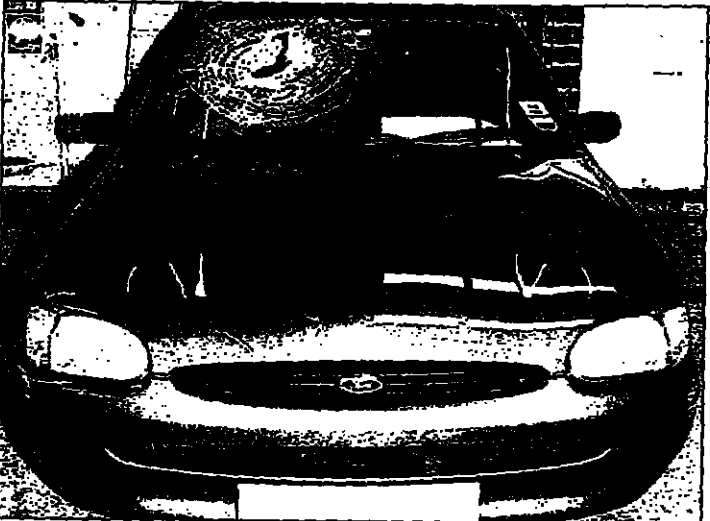
His sister Julie Brooksbank, 25, said she regarded those responsible for such a wanton act as mindless and sick. "It is just your worst nightmare and it is so needless. Nobody in any right mind would do that sort of thing."

She said that the family were hoping that his youth would aid his recovery. "He is young and strong and very determined."

His mother said: "He has got awful injuries to his chest, one of his lungs has collapsed and there



The bridge over the M3 from which the concrete was hurled



The 50lb block crashed through the windscreen of the car

are problems with his heart. We have been told the next 48 hours are going to be critical."

Superintendent Richard Stowe said that hurling a concrete block from a bridge showed a complete disregard for human life. "It was utterly reckless and crass stupidity."

There could have been children in the vehicle, it was totally random. It defies belief that people should want to kill someone that they have never met, never seen and do not even know."

Mr Willmott was travelling home on his own from Bourne-

mouth, Dorset, where he works as an account executive for the cable company Nynex, at around 8pm in moderately heavy traffic when the concrete smashed through his windscreen. The 1ft by 6in block had been hurled from a height of 22 feet.

The car stopped around 320 yards from the bridge. "The fact that he was not killed is down to the skill of his driving," said Superintendent Stowe. "Somehow he managed to bring the car to a halt in the last lane."

"God knows how he did it because by the time the first person got to the car he was unconscious, so it was a tremendous piece of driving to bring the car under control. He didn't skid and he didn't hit the crash barrier."

He appealed to anybody who had seen people on the bridge to come forward. "Whoever threw the concrete off can't have known who it would have hit. It was pitch black and they would have had no idea where it was going."

A driver from Essex reported a similar incident yesterday which happened last week. He was passing under the same bridge when the bonnet of his car was struck by a missile. He escaped injury and did not tell police until he heard that it had happened again with serious consequences.

Detective Chief Inspector John James said it appeared there had been a number of similar incidents at the bridge.

The motorway was closed for nine hours to allow police to study the scene and search for evidence. It remained closed during the rush



Victim Simon Willmott, who has head and chest injuries after being hit at 70mph

hour yesterday morning, reopening at 10am.

Mrs Brooksbank, of Hove, Sussex, said the family was devastated by the crime. "What they did was sick, beyond comprehension. I hope they catch them and charge them with attempted murder because that's what they did —

tried to murder him." Mr Willmott said: "Our son could lose his life because of their stupidity."

Detectives later revealed that a person, thought to be a juvenile, had been arrested and was helping police with their inquiries.

In 1984 taxi driver David Wilkie was killed while driving miner

David Williams to work during the miners' strike. Russell Shankland and Dean Hancock hurled a concrete block off a road bridge which hit the car, killing Mr Wilkie. They were convicted of murder but it was reduced to manslaughter on appeal and sentenced to eight years in prison.

Public school pupils call for head's reinstatement

By RUSSELL JENKINS

PUPILS at Cheltenham College campaigned yesterday for governors to reinstate their headmaster, Peter Wilkes, 55, has been forced to resign after disappointing examination results.

Pupils at the independent school in Gloucestershire organised posters and petitions and threatened classroom sit-ins and walkouts. One poster says: "Peter Wilkes — We Say He Stays" and another declares: "If he goes, we go — Peter Wilkes, the pupils' choice."

Mr Wilkes's resignation after seven years was announced last week by the college council, which said that a new head was needed to carry the school into the next century. Mr Wilkes, who is to remain until the end of the academic year, refused to speak about his departure.

A-level scores fell this year while those of rival schools

increased. Mr Wilkes's wife, Alice, who is a teacher, has said publicly that her husband has been the victim of examination league tables. But she said the tables concealed the fact that 20 of the college's pupils gained Oxbridge places this year. Forty-six per cent of GCSE results were A or A* and this year's A-level results were the third best in Cheltenham's history, she said.

Her husband announced this year that the 600-pupil school, founded in 1841 and with fees for boarders of £12,000 a year, was to become co-educational.

Air Commodore David Atherton, the school secretary, said of the pupils' campaign: "It is a genuine expression of affection for him and general dismay that he and the council have agreed that he should leave at the end of this year."

Mark Hicks-Beach, a school parent of Great Witcombe,

Gloucestershire, said of the resignation: "There is considerable fury among the parents. We feel insulted by the explanatory letter we were sent and we're hoping to take further action."

A fourth-former said that a petition was going round the school and that most pupils were signing it. A 17-year-old sixth-former said: "We are all shocked and upset. He is a really nice bloke. I have been to several independent schools and he is the best headmaster."

A sixth-former in his final year said: "He has brought the college into the 20th century with his decision to go co-ed and improve the sports facilities."

Another parent said that the pupils were threatening sit-ins and walkouts because they thought that the headmaster could hardly punish them for trying to get him reinstated.

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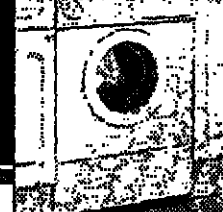
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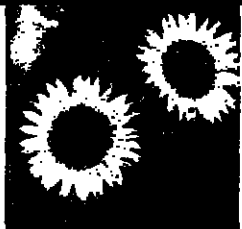
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Police can arrest after two claims of harassment

Stalkers face five years' jail in legal crackdown

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

STALKERS will face jail terms of up to five years under proposals announced by the Government yesterday.

Two new criminal offences would be created and people would be liable to arrest and prosecution after frightening or harassing their victims just twice. Under both offences it would not be necessary for the prosecution to prove that the stalker intended to frighten or distress the victim. It would have to prove only that the activities were intentional or that a reasonable person would realise that they frightened, harassed, alarmed or distressed the victim.

The police would have the power to search a suspected stalker's property, without a warrant, for evidence such as letters, photographs and videotapes. Victims of racial harassment and nuisance neighbours would also benefit from the proposed measures.

Ministers intend that the proposals should form the basis of a Private Member's Bill and hope that they will become law by early next year.

The measures are a considerable toughening of original Home Office plans, published three months ago. David Maclean, a junior Home Office minister, said: "We believe that this proposed Bill will form a formidable weapon against stalkers and finally provide victims with hope that, in the future, they will be able to live their lives free of intimidation and fear."

The proposals involve both the civil and criminal law, with prison sentences and fines for those convicted of stalking. The first new criminal offence involves the use of words or behaviour on more



Tracy Sant, whose stalker was jailed for three years. She welcomed the proposals

than one occasion which puts a person in fear of violence. It would carry a five-year prison sentence or an unlimited fine.

A second offence would involve the use of words or behaviour on more than one occasion "which would cause the victim to be harassed, alarmed or distressed". It would carry a maximum prison sentence of six months and/or a £5,000 fine. A new

civil injunction would operate where words or behaviour are used on more than one occasion which cause a victim to be distressed or alarmed. Anyone breaching the order would be committing a criminal offence carrying a maximum prison sentence of five years and an unlimited fine.

The Government has acted after a series of high-profile cases. Last month Dennis

Chambers, 37, was acquitted of causing grievous bodily harm to Margaret Bent, a 30-year-old café manager, who claimed that he took over her life by following her and bombarding her with telephone calls.

Also last month, Clarence Morris, 37, was found guilty of causing actual bodily harm to Perry Southall, 20, a dental nurse who was subjected to a campaign of intimidation that involved 200 incidents in eight months. In March, Anthony Burrows, 30, a Falklands veteran, was sentenced to three years imprisonment for causing grievous bodily harm to Tracy Sant, 28, during three years of harassment. Ms Sant said yesterday: "I am happy to hear that finally victims are going to have a light at the end of the tunnel. Nobody understands what being stalked is like unless they go through it. I was told just to ignore it and he would go away. But they don't go away."

Most victims of stalkers are women. A recent study of 155 cases found that 144 victims were female and ten were male. The other case involved an entire family.

The study identified five categories of stalker. In 40 of the cases the stalker was a neighbour or casual friend, 30 involved a formerly intimate relationship, 25 a former domestic partner and 24 a work colleague. In 32 cases the stalker was unknown to the victim.

In each case the initial trigger was either the ending of a relationship or an innocent and platonic encounter. There was no evidence that any of the victims could be considered to have brought the stalking upon themselves.

Leading article, page 23

Curb could hit journalists' inquiries

By CAROL MIDDLEY

JOURNALISTS, debt collectors and Jehovah's Witnesses could all fall foul of the legislation, it was claimed yesterday.

Concern centres on the second of the two new criminal offences. A maximum penalty of six months' jail, a £5,000 fine, or both, could be applied to anyone using "words or behaviour, on more than one occasion, which would cause the victim to be harassed, alarmed or distressed, either

intentionally or in circumstances where a reasonable person would have realised this would be the effect."

The Home Office admitted that this could lead to the arrest of journalists involved in investigating the activities of people who did not want the attention. The proposals include a defence of acting reasonably and necessarily in pursuit of business, trade or profession.

However, Santha Rasiiah, of the Newspaper Society, said that if a person

subjected to unwanted, but legitimate, media attention sent a circular to media companies instructing them not to contact or photograph them, or to desist from an investigation, that would establish grounds for legal action. Ignoring the instruction could make a journalist liable to immediate arrest. "Although we can quite understand the target, our concern is that this should not be open to exploitation and manipulation to centre on an unintended target."

Strikes put 30,000 jobs at risk, says Post Office

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

ANOTHER suspension of the Royal Mail's monopoly because of further strikes could put 30,000 jobs at risk, the Post Office has told MPs.

The warning came in a memo to MPs on the Trade and Industry Select Committee which has been leaked as the Communication Workers' Union ballots its members on whether to accept an offer previously rejected by the union executive or to resume industrial action.

The Post Office said the forecast was based on the loss of market share to competitors who offered services for business users in the Midlands during the last one-month suspension of the monopoly. The Government has said it will suspend the monopoly for three months if there are further strikes. A spokesman for the Post Office conceded that 30,000 was the estimated figure for job losses if the monopoly was broken for more than three months. The union dismissed the Post Office's leaked warning as a scare tactic.

Duchess of York loses her flag day

By ROBIN YOUNG

A COUNCIL which raised the Union Jack to honour the Duchess of York's 37th birthday hauled it down again after Buckingham Palace pointed out that she was no longer royal.

The flag flew from the Ivybridge, Devon, town hall for four hours on Tuesday because the Duchess's name was on a Royal British Legion list of royals who deserved recognition. The council checked with the Palace when some Legion members complained that she was unsuitable to be honoured.

The town clerk, Donald Helling, said: "We always put up the flag for official occasions. We felt that she was still the Duchess of York so she was still entitled to the flag. However, we had a couple of complaints so in the end we rang Buckingham Palace. They told us we could fly the flag, but did not have to. We will be checking with the British Legion whether they suggest we fly the flag for the Duchess's birthday in future."

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Latest republican film hands IRA another transatlantic victory on propaganda front

Big Apple takes a bite out of the beastly British

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN EAST HAMPTON, LONG ISLAND

A SECOND salvo of Irish republican hero-making struck the United States on Wednesday night in genteel Long Island, where a cinematic saga about the H-block hunger strikers opened the Hamptons Film Festival to applause and Brit-bashing. The film arrived a week after the opening of Hollywood's *Michael Collins*.

Some Mother's Son, which tells one side of the story of Bobby Sands and his fellow prisoners, was more subtle than the second-phase booby trap bomb the IRA exploded last week in Lisburn. Co Antrim, but the damage it could inflict on British interests may be greater. The film festival, whose patrons include the director Steven Spielberg and the actor Roy Scheider, was happy to oblige a film which even its director Terry George, a former republican prisoner, recognises as being biased.

During the screening, audience members thrilled to the whirl of Irish dance music as IRA gunmen attacked British soldiers. They tut-tutted when

British characters said that terrorists were murderers, not prisoners of war. When 1981 footage of an unyielding Margaret Thatcher was used, a person behind me exhaled loudly to express disapproval. When Provo supporters verbally attacked a pacifist Mother Superior, there came sniggers.

The film — an award-winner at the Edinburgh Festival — dwells on the foul-smelling conditions in Maze Prison during the Eighties' "dirty protest". In the East Hampton picture house, the reek was of Arpège, Guerlain — and a dash of prejudice.

Sponsors for the opening night of the festival included *Evan*, *American Express*, *The New York Times* and the once British-owned car company Jaguar. At the end of the screening, the Calvin Klein-clad bourgeoisie of East Hampton, a cocoon of wealth two hours' drive from New York city, discussed the film. Four 50-something women, prosperous in appearance, attacked all things British.

"Those bloody British," said one, spitting out the Anglicism. "I do hate them a lot," agreed another, loudly. "And to think it happened just a few years ago. God, I hate Thatcher."

Julienne Scaron, a voluntary worker of Hungarian descent from Sag Harbour, showed no embarrassment about her anti-Britishness. "The truth will out," she said. "I hated Thatcher and I hate Major." Earlier, before she heard my own English accent, she had attacked "the way they speak, the way they act — I hate them".

The release of *Some Mother's Son*, and *Michael Collins*, about the early IRA, coincides with a discernible rise in anti-British sentiment in New York. Last week the state governor, George Pataki, compared British officialdom's behaviour during the Irish potato famine to Nazi conduct during the Holocaust. An opinion-forming weekly, the *New York Observer*, published a vitriolic article which complained about the handful of magazine editors who have moved from London to Manhattan. It said: "This city's cultural elite is infested with Anglo imports on a mission to drive down the American IQ and thus exact revenge for the Empire's disintegration into worldwide influence of Icelandic proportions."

New York media references

to the Royal Family are increasingly abusive, perceptions of British society are out of date and the British (specifically, English) character is insulted in a way that would not, in this city so finely attuned to defamation, be tolerated of other cultures. The level of abuse seems higher than that of the mindless anti-Americanism in London in the Seventies and Eighties.

Ken Maginnis, a Unionist MP, said recently that "the IRA has lost the shooting war and now they are going all-out to win the propaganda war". Long Island saw that war's Western front, in the raw.

Some Mother's Son is one of four films about the Northern Irish Troubles in the Hamptons Festival. Film festival organisers like controversy,



Helen Mirren as Kathleen Quigley, a mother comforting her republican son dying of starvation during a hunger strike in the Maze prison

no matter the price in terms of balance or the sensitivity of timing over political developments. "I had no doubts about releasing this film," said Ken Tabachnick, the festival's executive director. Ed Burke, one

of the film's producers, pointed out that "the only group that does any killing in the film is the IRA" and the movie's British star, the left-of-centre Helen Mirren, said that it was about "the appalling

dilemmas" that faced the hunger strikers' mothers. The film is certainly an adroit piece of work and is careful to carry some balance, but in gut it is pro-IRA. If it was about the mothers and not their gun-

ting sons, should it not have been titled *Some Son's Mother*?

As he took plaudits from the expensively cushioned Hamptons swells, Belfast-born Terry George said of his film: "It's

only one side of the story." Alas, at a time that the IRA's support in America might finally have been on the slide, it is the only side of the Troubles that most Americans will get to see.



Pataki: compared famine to Holocaust



Maginnis: spoke of a propaganda war

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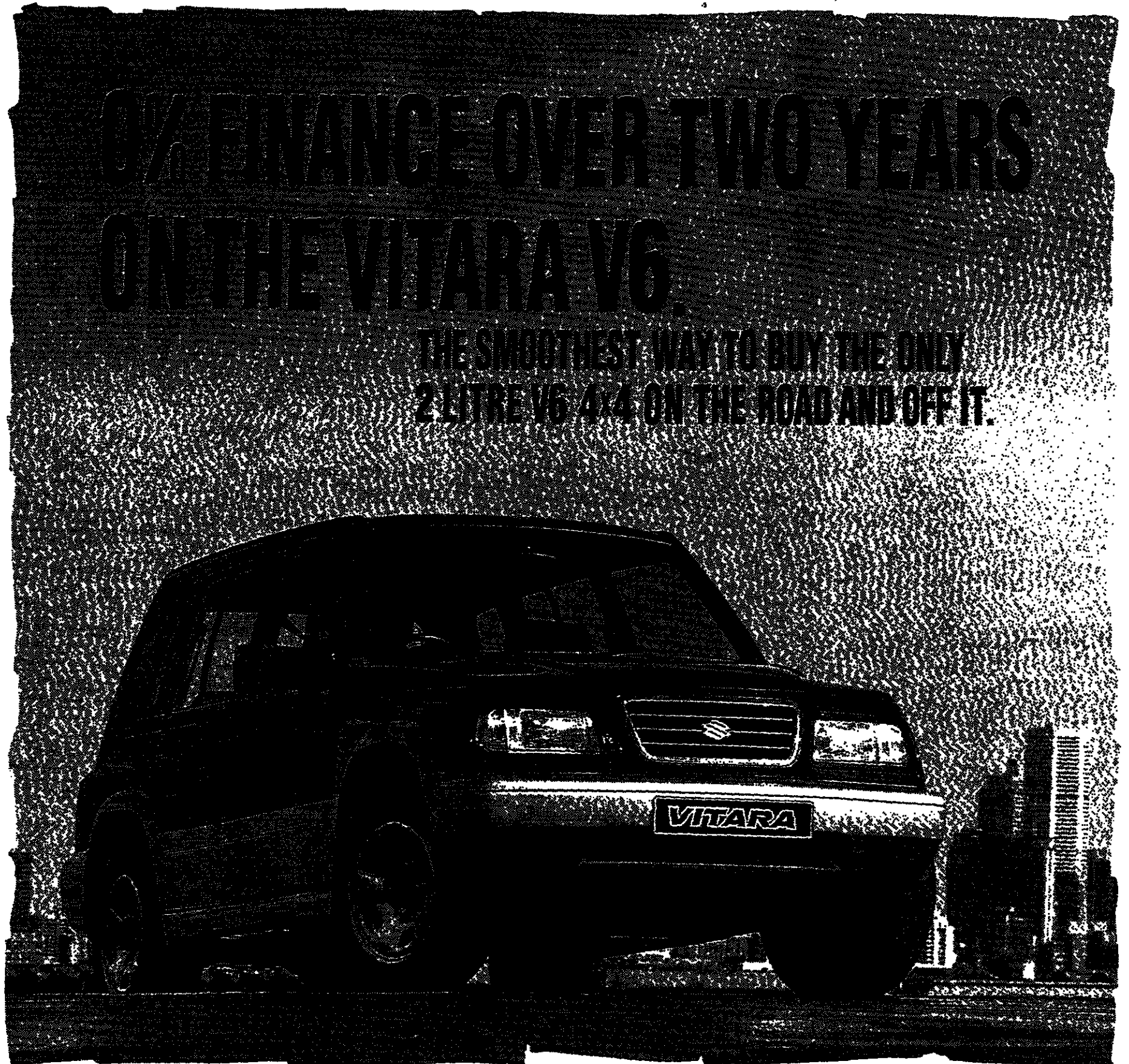
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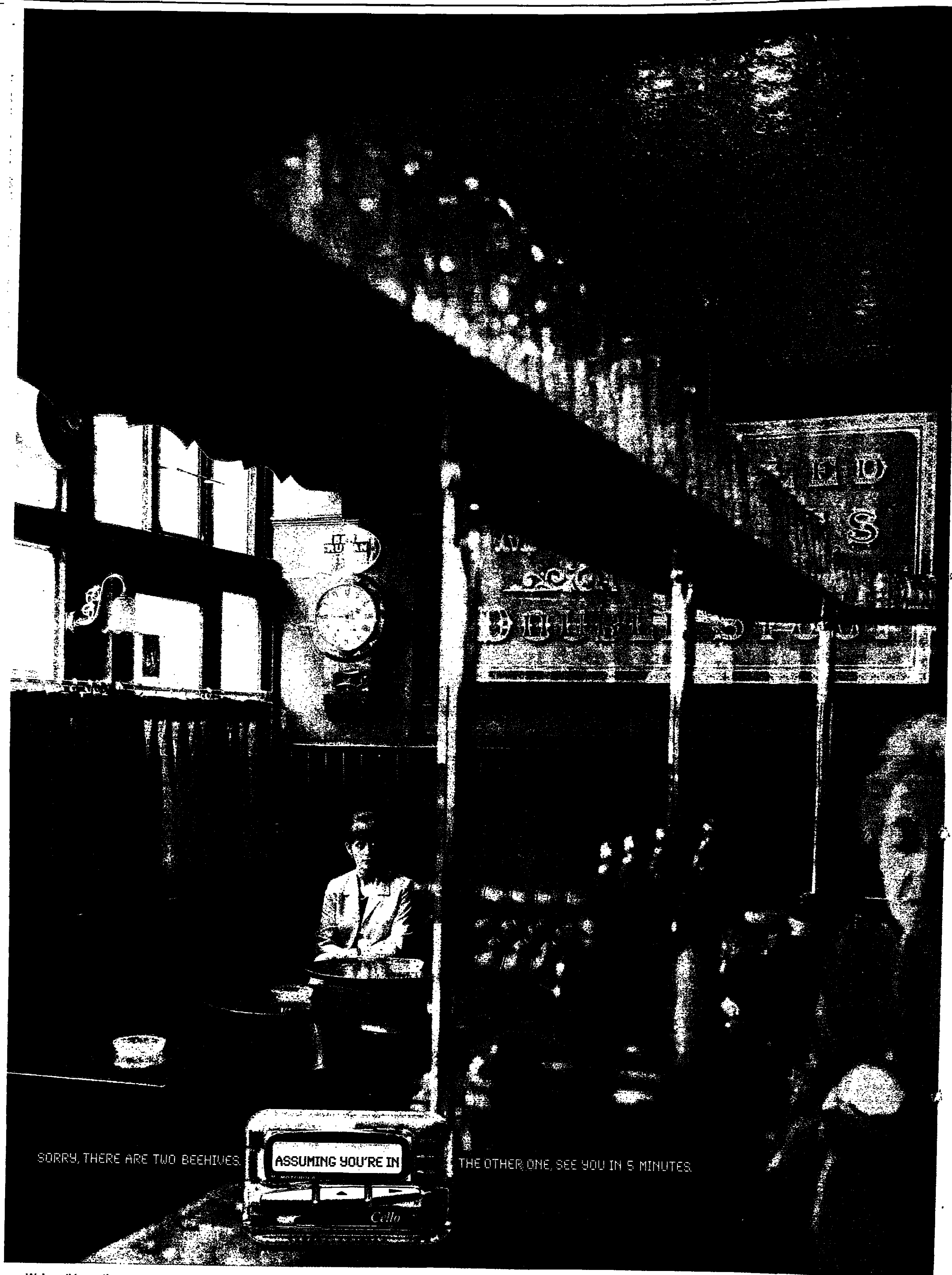
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Her last launch was a liner but Her Majesty was as happy to make a small cruiser go with a big splash

Queen pushes the boat out for an East End boy

By BILL FRONT

IT was not the usual royal launching. Despite its illustrious-sounding name, the *Millennium of London* was not heading for life on the ocean waves. It will go little further than a mile along the Thames.

But cut-glass accents and estuary English cohabited happily yesterday when the Queen launched a passenger boat for an illiterate East End millionaire. It was the smallest vessel ever blessed by the sovereign.

The boat's owner, Gary Beckwith, a former market trader who cannot read or write, said: "This was the greatest day of my life. She knew we were all nervous and made it very easy for us. She was very gracious."

The staunch royalist from Leyton, east London, hit upon the idea of asking the Queen to launch his 11th boat while it was being built at a Welsh shipyard. However, his "difficulty with words" prevented



The last Royal launch was the *Oriana*, above, which is eight times bigger than the *Millennium*

him from writing to Buckingham Palace.

Paul Wilson, his friend and fellow director of City Cruises, put down in writing what he wanted to say and a reply came back from Buckingham Palace saying the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh were delighted to accept the invitation.

The Queen's last ship launch, in April 1995, was P & O's giant cruiser *MV Oriana*, 260 metres long, weighing 69,153 tonnes, and carrying about 2,000 passen-

gers across the seas. The *Millennium* is 30.7 metres long, 85 tonnes, and will carry up to 400 passengers along the river between the Tower and Westminster.

After the launching at a pier below the Tower, Mr Beckwith, 44, said he revered the Queen "from a personal and business point of view". He added: "Let's face it, most visitors to London come because of the Royal Family. I would like to thank her and the Duke of Edinburgh for coming. They are welcome

back aboard anytime. When I was a boy, I always wanted to meet the Queen. This is the crowning of an unusual business career."

After a childhood of poverty and illiteracy, Mr Beckwith worked variously as an under-wear salesman, milkman, bookmaker's clerk and croupier before launching his pleasure-boat company, based at a floating office in south-east London. He knows the operating area well — he fished the same stretch of the Thames as a boy.

His business is now said to be worth £5 million and he has a yellow Rolls-Royce. Among his customers are many of London's Asian community, who hire his boats to scatter the ashes of the departed on the water.

The Queen's other previous launches include the warships *HMS Invincible*, and *HMS Sheffield* — sunk during the Falklands War — plus the QE2, the Royal Yacht *Britannia* and the nuclear submarine *HMS Dreadnought*.



The Queen is introduced to former market trader Gary Beckwith as she launches London's latest passenger boat

Cannon is latest shot at leaves on line

By NICK NUTTALL

A NEW weapon against the railways' most celebrated excuse for a delay, leaves on the line, is undergoing tests between Salisbury and Exeter.

Staff at Railtrack have kitted out a small locomotive with an advanced water cannon so powerful that its jet can cut through wood. Engineers hope the test-blasting loco, which is being tested at night, will end their annual embarrassment of delayed trains as wheels skate and slip on rails coated in crushed, fallen leaves.

Along with the other legendary excuse, "the wrong kind of snow", leaves on the line cost more than £10 million a year in damaged trains and rails. Bev Whitty of Railtrack said yesterday: "Leaves have long been the butt of railway jokes. But they affect trains' ability to accelerate and, in some cases, stop safely. The trial aims to change all that."

Water cannons have been tried before in the long and sorry saga of tackling leaves on the line. But the previous attempt, a few years ago, failed because the pressure of the jets was too weak and the system could operate at only 5 mph.

Other ideas studied by British Rail in the past include putting rails in water troughs at notorious leaf blackspots; stunting trees by suppressing leaf formation; special leaf fences; using a Swedish scrubber train with wire brushes; and "aerodynamic leaf deflectors". A "plasma torch treatment train", which tried to burn leaves and mulch, was tested in Kent but abandoned.

The new French-built cannon on trial delivers a blast of 1,000 bar and the train can whip along at 35 mph. Early findings indicate that the pressure is enough to lift the most stubborn leaves. Officials believe the system will be superior to the ageing fleet of special trains that spray a sticky goo onto rails to reduce the risk of wheel slip.

During the age of steam, sparks from the boiler would often ignite fallen leaves and nearby trees alleviating the threat. Cutting back trees is often unpopular among householders whose homes overlook the line.

Court puts stop to melody that lingered on

A woman whose obsessive playing of *Unchained Melody* made her neighbours' lives a misery was ordered to leave her council home in Camden, north London. Joan Lowe, 34, continued to hold drunken parties into the early hours of the morning in spite of several police warnings. A neighbour told London County Council: "That blasted song was played again and again until two or three in the morning."

Judge halts strike

A four-day strike by 1,200 staff at Newcastle City Health NHS Trust was called off after managers obtained a High Court injunction. Unison called the strike, which was due to start on Monday, after the breakdown of pay talks last month.

Cranberries off

The Cranberries rock group have called off a 37-date European tour because the singer, Dolores O'Riordan, is ill. Miss O'Riordan, 23, apologised to fans for cancelling because of a leg injury, complicated by the stress of travelling and performing.

Hammer attack

Anthony Comm, 27, who blinded a girl aged 16 in one eye by hurling a hammer through a car window, was jailed for three years. Comm, who admitted causing a danger to road users, told Oxford Crown Court that he had intended to hit the car.

Nice surprise

A man has just discovered he won £340,000 last Saturday. Brian Greene, 40, a hotel chef from Birmingham, places a £1 each-way accumulator bet every Saturday. He thought he had backed a horse that lost, but in fact he had backed a winner.

Escapes inquiry

Sir Anthony Grant, the MP for Cambridgeshire South-West, has called for an inquiry after a murderer and another violent patient escaped from Kneesworth House psychiatric hospital in Cambridgeshire, scene of five escapes in two months.

Top scorers

The bat used by Jack Hobbs to score his 126th century and beat W.G. Grace's record in 1925 has been sold for £10,350, four times the estimate. The buyer also paid £1,500 for the bat with which Wally Hammond made his first century.

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*Source: Hindsight, UK Growth & Income Sector and Gilt and Fixed Interest Sector. Figures calculated on a monthly basis from launch to 30.9.96, on an offer to bid price basis with net income reinvested.
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LEAVING TOO MUCH MONEY IN ORDINARY SAVINGS ACCOUNT DOES LITTLE FOR SAVER.

See page 37.

Hartlepool is Britain's top new attraction in £1 billion boom year for tourism

Town that discovered the quay to fortune

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

AN old north-east dockyard which found fresh life as a museum was named yesterday as the nation's most successful new tourist attraction, in a year when Britain's search for days out broke all records.

The Museum of Hartlepool was visited by 210,000 people in its first 12 months — twice the population of the town itself. Across the country, the amount spent by visitors to Britain's total of 5,818 tourist attractions went up last year by 6 per cent to a record £1.1 billion.

Entry to the £4 million Museum of Hartlepool is free, but the local authority says that the whole town benefits from the income provided by tourists. The museum was built on an old quayside area of the town and now houses a collection of fishing boats and a paddle steamer.

"The success is phenomenal," museum officer Gary Topp said. "At least 1 per cent of the visitors are foreigners."

For an area which has no history of tourism, this shows what can be done when an area is regenerated.

Figures published today by the four national tourist boards range from the 7.3 million who went to Blackpool Pleasure Beach to the 12,365 who visited a National Trust semi-detached house in Worsop, Nottinghamshire. More than 80 new attractions opened during 1995.

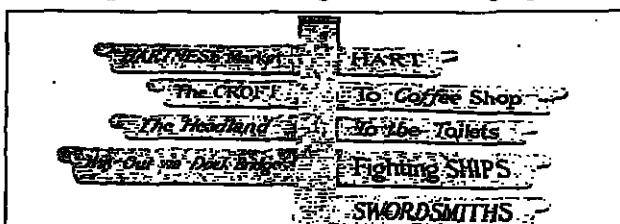
A tour of the Granada TV studios, where Coronation Street is made, has now replaced Stonehenge in the top 20 attractions which visitors must pay to enter.

Tim Bartlett, chief executive of the English Tourist Board, said that better marketing, improved facilities and the good weather encouraged more visits last year. "There is now an awareness of how important tourism can be."

The average adult admission charge in 1995 was £2.42. Overseas visitors accounted for 18 per cent of all visits and 32



Visitors on the dockside at Hartlepool and, below, signs of the changing times at the £4 million museum



World of Adventures 1,770,000; 5. Science Museum, London 1,556,368; 6. St Paul's Cathedral 1,500,000; 7. Natural History Museum, London 1,442,591; 8. Windsor Castle 1,212,305; 9. Blackpool Tower 1,205,000; 10. Thorpe Park, Surrey 1,166,000; 11. Kew Gar-

dens 1,060,000; 12. Windermere Lake Cruises 1,054,414; 13. London Zoo 1,042,701; 14. Edinburgh Castle 1,037,788; 15. Drayton Manor Park, Tamworth, Staffs 1,000,000; 16. Royal Academy, London 881,000; 17. Roman Baths, Bath 872,915; 18. Warwick

Castle 803,000; 19. Chester Zoo 760,580; 20. Granada Studios 750,000.

The top ten free attractions were: 1. Blackpool Pleasure Beach 7,300,000; 2. British Museum 5,745,866; 3. National Gallery, London 4,469,019; 4. Strathclyde Country Park, Motherwell 4,150,000; 5. Palace Pier, Brighton 3,800,000; 6. Farnham and Lamberdown, London 2,500,000; 7. Eastbourne Pier 2,300,000; 8. Westminster Abbey 2,245,000; 9. Pleasure Beach, Great Yarmouth 2,000,000; 10. York Minster 2,000,000.

Credo

Vale of tears that leads to redemption

John Haldane

LIFE is often hard. People act badly, hopes are dashed, tragedies occur. Gaudy though they may be, the television simulacra for evil pale by comparison with the thing itself, precisely because they are not real. A bleeding nose is more disturbing than a studio killing. When blood is drawn life flows away, and every day much blood and many lives are lost.

Each sunrise heralds a procession of betrayals, cruelties and disappointments. Parents struggle with the fact of their children's handicaps; friends and spouses continue long-established patterns of deceit; the sick and the old worry about living and about dying. We stumble and stagger on towards death.

What does religion have to say about these facts? So far as the Roman Catholic tradition is concerned, it emphasises the sacrifice of Calvary and affirms its continuing redemptive function. In the oratory of the Mass the participants transcend earthly space and time and enter into a sacred dimension in which Christ's sacrifice stands before God as an atonement for human failing. That is one mystery; here is a second, reaffirmed in the experience of the great spiritual writers: God permits us to conjoin our suffering to that of Christ as part of his redemptive act.

That cannot mean that Christ's passion is of itself insufficient; rather it is as if by courtesy of the main parties one becomes associated with a wonderful gift and thereby is a co-recipient of gratitude. Wittgenstein, the greatest philosopher of this century, once wrote: "The only life that is happy is the life that can renounce the amenities of the world." His point is not that one should as a matter of fact, or of principle, renounce comfort; but that one should be disposed to equanimity in its absence.

However, although he was baptised a Catholic and received instruction in the faith, Wittgenstein's "spirituality" is more stoical than Christian. His

recommendation of renunciation belongs in the tradition of philosophies of detachment familiar from the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius and from the teachings of the Buddha.

Wittgenstein says: "Learn to be content." Christ teaches us to pray to the Father: "Thy will be done... but deliver us from evil." The evil in question is not suffering but sin. The *Pater Noster* ends not with a request to be spared discomfort and death but with a plea to be freed from the influence of moral corruption.

The difference between the spirituality of stoicism and of Christianity flows from the latter's doctrines of creation, fall and redemption. God made the world in which we suffer. He did not cause that suffering, yet He permits it. Part of the explanation is that suffering is an occasion for spiritual growth.

Catholic doctrine does more than identify this world as a "vale of tears"; it insists that God entered into the condition of His creation and thus suffered with and on behalf of it. This is the ultimate demonstration of the justice of God: that He elects to endure whatever pain his creatures may suffer and cause.

In his work of spiritual direction, *The Journey of the Soul to God*, St Bonaventure writes: "Divine aid is at hand for all who seek it with a truly humble and devout heart, by sighing for it in this vale of tears by fervent prayer." The teaching of the great spiritual writers is constant: those who live in the presence of Christ will die with God and those who die with God will live forever. We can enter into the divine presence by prayer and the sacrifice of the Mass, but a tangible symbol of that presence is a crucifix. I pray that when I die one will be on my person, if not in my hand.

John Haldane is Professor of Philosophy in the University of St Andrews.

At your Service. Weekend, page 11

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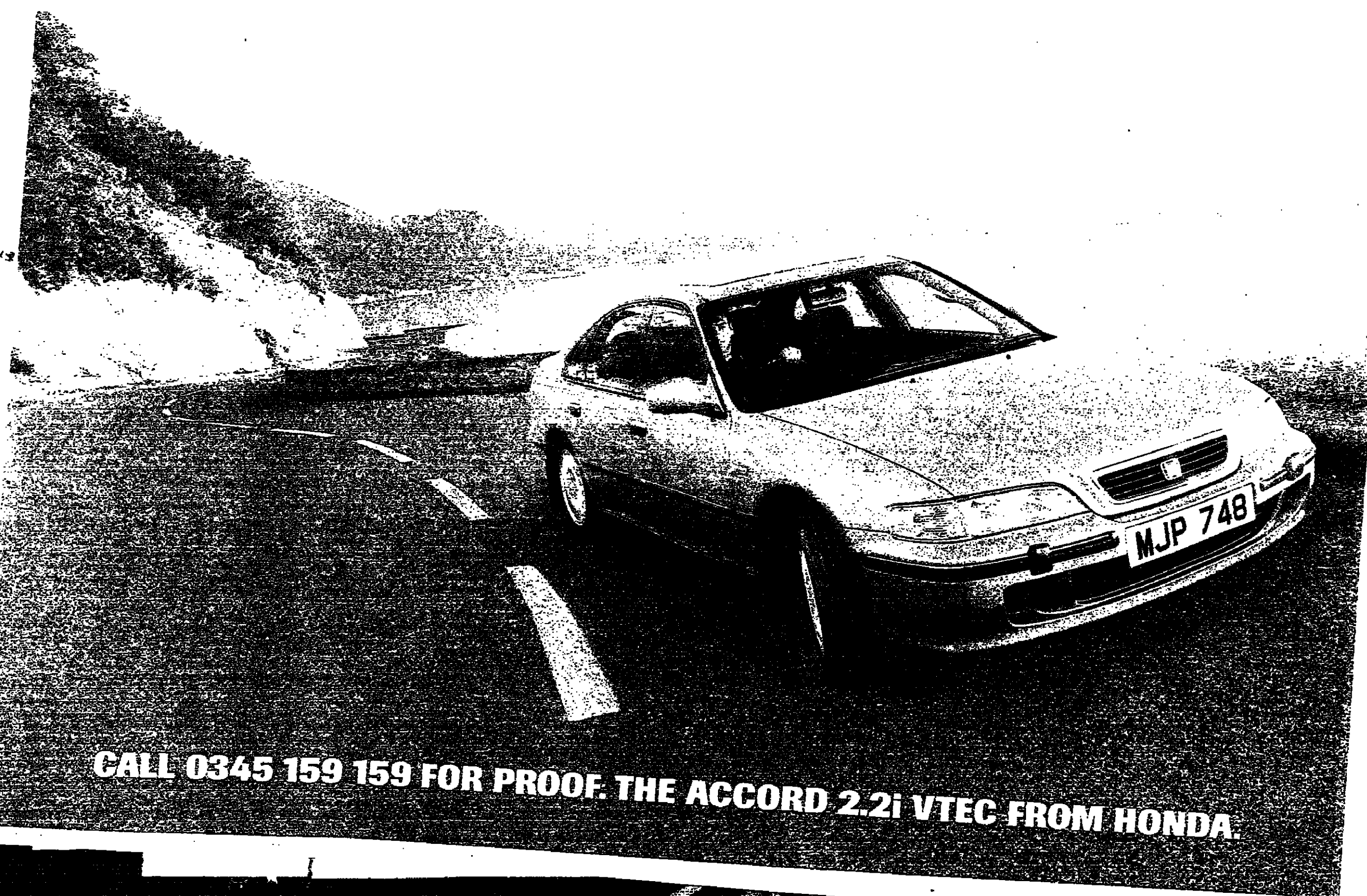
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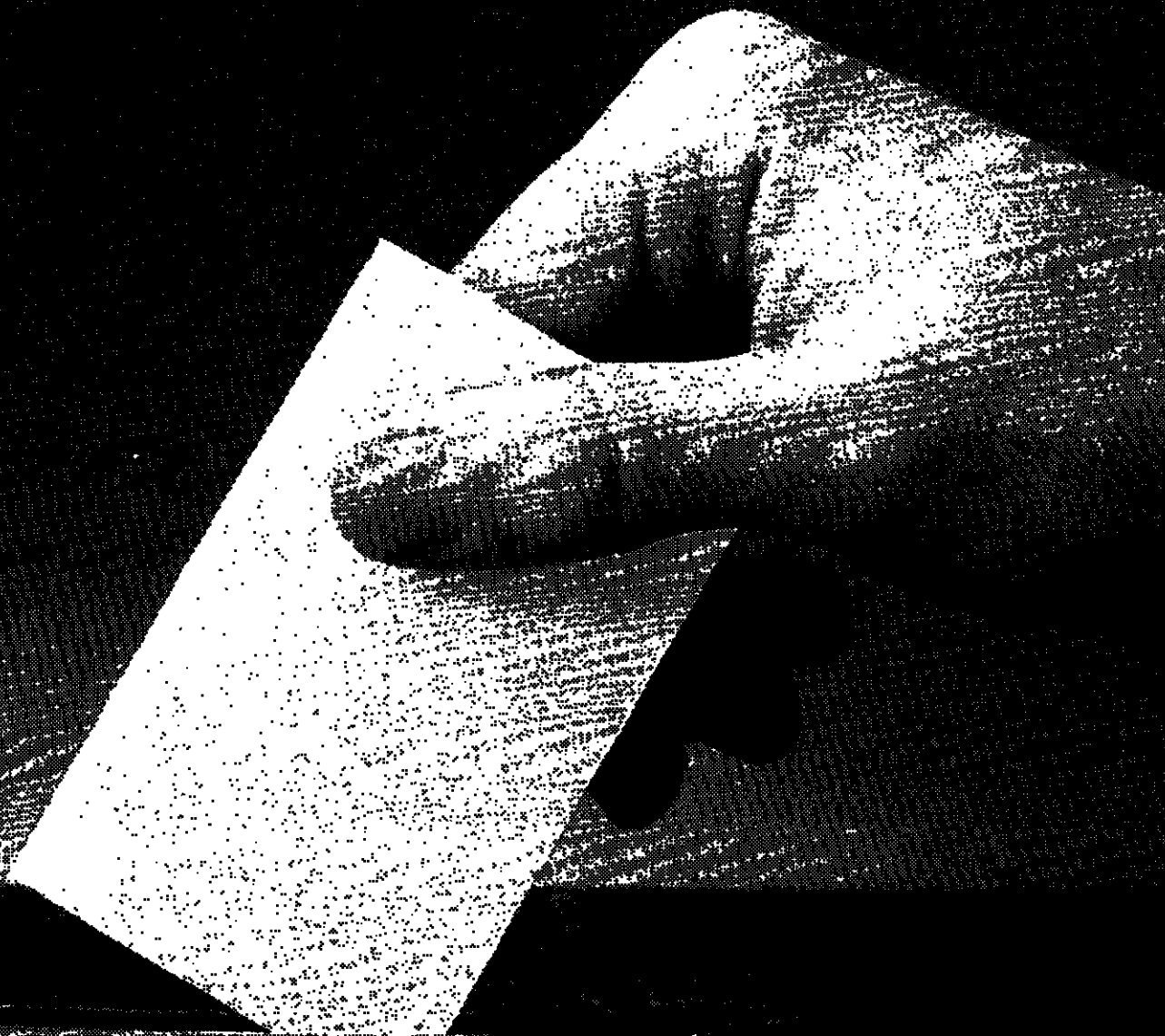
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Wet weekend forecast for Brighton as internal storms threaten to erode Goldsmith's European beachhead

Santer rebuffs Sir James over call for debate

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

JACQUES SANTER yesterday brushed off Sir James Goldsmith's challenge to debate with him Britain's place in Europe and suggested that the financier put his case in the European Parliament instead.

"As President of the European Commission, I am not at the beck and call of billionaire Goldsmith," M. Santer said in a written statement. "Sir James is an eminent member of the directly elected European Parliament. This is the best forum for a democratic debate on European questions," he said.

He noted that Sir James, who, as an MEP for France, has one of the poorest attendance records at the Strasbourg assembly, had failed to take part in a debate on the state of the European Union last month. "He has another good opportunity next week when the European Parliament will discuss the political programme for 1997. I suggest he makes good use of this."

Sir James financed and was elected as an MEP for the Europe of Nations group in the 1994 European elections. The group, which includes Philippe de Villiers, a nationalist candidate in last year's French presidential election, is committed to the anti-Maastricht cause.

The financier issued his

challenge to a live television debate in his latest full-page newspaper advertisement for the Referendum Party yesterday. He was responding to an attack by the Commission on an earlier advertisement which claimed that Britain was really governed by the 20 European Commissioners in Brussels.

The Commission ridiculed the claim as showing ignorance of the way the EU worked. EU laws are enacted by the council of member governments, not by the Commission, it pointed out.

A spokesman for M. Santer added yesterday: "If Mr Goldsmith thinks that the Commission has too much power, it is the kind of remark that should be made in the European Parliament."

Sir Leon Brittan, the senior British EU Commissioner, said yesterday that it would be "plain daft" for Britain to exclude itself from monetary union now and throw away the right to take part in decisions for setting up the single currency. In a speech in Leeds, he attacked Tory Eurosceptics for renewing their demands to rule out British entry.

"The case for leaving the question open and being taken seriously at the negotiating table has become stronger than ever," he said.



Sir James Goldsmith arriving in Brighton yesterday for his party conference

Disharmony as key players abandon one-man band

BY ALICE THOMSON AND PHILIP WEBSTER

DESERTIONS and embarrassing admissions were among the hitches encountered by the Referendum Party as it prepared last night for its inaugural conference.

Sir James Goldsmith, whose party is demanding a referendum on Britain's role in the European Union, had hoped to parade defectors from the Tory party at today's gathering in Brighton. But last night one of his recruits, the former Tory MP Tim Brinton, "went home" to the Conservatives and four others were rumoured to be ready to jump ship today to the rival UK Independence Party.

As John Major dismissed the new party as a "fringe organisation" that would not get many votes, Lord McAlpine of West Green, the former Tory treasurer, and Sir Alan Walters, Lady Thatcher's former economic adviser, admitted that voting for Sir James might help Labour to win seats at the general election.

To make matters worse, the opening news conference on the Sussex coast last night was marred by charges that journalists who had been critical of the party had been treated by the party.

tors from the Referendum Party have held talks with Alan Sked, the UK Independence Party's leader. Three are candidates in Lancashire, Norfolk and Worcestershire. One is a regional organiser.

Referendum Party officials who arrived yesterday morning in a wet Brighton played down the threat of defections and said they were nothing compared with the 10,000 new members the party had attracted this week.

Mr Brinton, 66, said he was "glad and relieved" to be out. "In 1994 many people of my age and stage were thoroughly fed up with the Tories. Sir James was very attractive because he gave British people a choice. But now it is increasingly clear that the only way we can get a referendum and a proper decision on Europe is by keeping John Major in and Tony Blair out. So I am back," he said.

Mr Sked's party will hold a rally in Brighton's Old Ship Hotel, and hope to announce their new recruits this afternoon. Mr Sked said that the four members he had talked to were angry at the "shoddy" way they had been treated by the party. "They told me that Sir

James was a one-man band and a megalomaniac. They are not allowed to express their own views and anyone who is not famous is treated like dirt. They definitely felt they didn't belong to the right social class to be accepted by him," Mr Sked said.

The Referendum Party's biggest catch, Lord McAlpine, frankly admitted that it could help Labour candidates — whose stance is seen as more pro-European than that of the Conservatives — to win seats at the election. Asked on Granada Talk TV yesterday if this made him nervous of the tactic, Lord McAlpine replied: "I am not scared of it. I actually think it is going to happen."

"I think John Major and his Cabinet should be scared of it and I think they should actually announce there is going to be a referendum."

Sir Alan Walters also hinted that the party could let Labour into power. He said: "If that did happen, it would be a Labour Government with a slim majority and looking over its shoulder all the time."

Michael Gove, Magazine, page 19

Major admits size of deficit is a 'blot on the horizon'

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR admitted yesterday that the Government's high borrowing was a "blot" on the economic horizon, the clearest pointer so far that he accepts substantial tax cuts will be impossible to achieve in the November Budget.

The Prime Minister's public acknowledgement that the state of government debt was "a problem" follows an even bleaker private assessment by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, at Thursday's Cabinet meeting. As Mr Clarke called his Treasury team together for weekend talks at Dorneywood, his official country residence, it emerged that he had warned Cabinet colleagues that his options were severely circumscribed both by the size of the deficit and the demands on spending budgets.

With ministers anxious to avoid pre-election rows over cuts, the Chancellor is understood to believe that only

modest reductions in the levels of public spending planned a year ago can be contemplated. That will disappoint the Tory Right, which has been pressing for heavy cuts to fund a pre-election tax bonanza.

The Dorneywood gathering is expected to conclude that it is probably the most that Mr Clarke will be able to afford to knock off income tax. He has told colleagues that he cannot take risks with the financial allocations to schools and the health service in the run-up to the election.

Amid indications that discussions within the Cabinet's EDX spending committee have become tense and difficult, Mr Clarke's warning to the Cabinet during a general discussion about the economy was said to have been firm. The BSE crisis had had a big impact on his room for manoeuvre, he said. It has already taken £1 billion off this

year's spending contingency reserve and will take at least another £1 billion next year.

Lower tax revenues have meant that Mr Clarke's hopes of cutting the budget deficit this year have not been realised. The deficit in the first six months of the financial year was £19.3 billion, after removing privatisation proceeds, compared with £20.1 billion last year.

Although Mr Major delivered an optimistic message about the overall state of the economy during talks with businessmen yesterday, he made plain that he would not take any short-term risks that might fuel a revival of inflation.

He said that inflation was "as much under lock and key as I can ever remember it". But he then added: "The only economic blot on the horizon is the size of the fiscal deficit. That is a problem."

WHAT HELPED WIN THE MOTABILITY CONTRACT WAS NOT JUST THEIR SKILLS, BUT THEIR POSITIVE ATTITUDE

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"The way the local workforce had adapted to dealing direct gave us the confidence to look at opportunities such as Motability."

Telecommunications technology? That was easy. Merseyside has just about the most advanced system in Europe, and with the telecom-trained staff to go with it.

But it was the staff of the Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance that tipped the balance. Not just their skills, but their attitude.

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"For Motability, fully comprehensive meant more than just policy cover - it meant handling the special needs of disabled drivers. Our Merseyside staff rose to that challenge."

Adaptability and enthusiasm have been the watchwords of Merseyside for a generation. The clerical skills developed by companies like Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance and Littlewoods 20 years ago are now the telephone skills of today's generation using state of the art equipment.

And look at some of the other companies investing on Merseyside - Kodak, Ford, Barclays and oil and gas exploration company, BHP.

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General loathed by corrupt elite believes military is best place to build a new patriotism

Yeltsin's gravest error paves way for people's hero

BY GEOFFREY HOSKING

AT FIRST SIGHT the dismissal of Aleksandr Lebed looks like just another twist in the seemingly endless factional intrigues which rend the Kremlin. This time much more is at stake: the whole nature of Russian politics in the post-Soviet era. To understand the significance of what is going on, one needs to think back not just to the Soviet era, but even before.

The tsars used to base their ideology on three cardinal principles: Orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality. In his recent autobiography, General Lebed put forward his own holy Russian trinity in a slightly different form: Orthodoxy, nationality, the army.

The difference is significant. General Lebed is a blunt man, alienated from the whole political elite in Russia and loathed by them. He learnt most of what he knows about life in the army, and considers it a better school of both nationhood and leadership than conventional politics.

General Lebed represents a new kind of Russian nationalism, and probably one better

COMMENTARY

sited to the new era than that of his opponents. Historically speaking, Russia, both in its tsarist and Soviet forms, was a huge and diverse empire ruled by multi-ethnic, patron-client hierarchies. Russians were to be found at all layers in these hierarchies, often at the very lowest, especially in the non-Russian regions.

They were the pawns and day labourers of empire as well as its rulers. The result was that ethnic solidarity was surprisingly weak among Russians. When "their" empire collapsed in 1991, they mostly did not react by seizing weapons and taking to the streets, as the French did in Algeria. Instead they emigrated to Russia or settled down to uneasy co-operation with their new masters.

The one exception was Moldova. There, in 1992, Russians by armed force carved out for themselves an autonomous territory — the Transnistria republic — where Russian rather than Romanian continued to be the official language. Significant-

ly, the leader of the Russian army in Moldova then, and the man who took the initiative, was none other than General Lebed. He was determined to save the men under his command and the Russians living on the territory from the humiliations of "foreign" rule.

But he would enter no deals with the political leaders of the territory he had rescued, Russian though they mostly were; indeed, he brusquely repudiated them when he discovered they were up to the same clannish and corrupt intrigues as their predecessors.

General Lebed is a politician who likes to appeal directly to the Russian people. Personally honest, he keeps clear of the networks of patrons and clients who ran the old Soviet Union and who still call the shots in the new Russia. That is why he has lost the latest bout of infighting.

It is also why he may well win the war. He is immensely popular in Russia, among people of all social classes, including many intellectuals, who would normally steer well clear of generals. They sense that he is the man to cut

through the unceasing feuding and corruption.

His popularity was reinforced by his success in signing a peace settlement with the Chechen rebels this summer — however shaky that may prove to be. For the Russian people are no longer imperialist in the sense of being ready to send their sons to be maimed or killed in colonial wars. That was one reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union, and it continues to be true now. Most Russians sense that Chechnya is a pawn in factional contests for power

and money whose prizes are arms and oil. They would be prepared to cut their losses and concede it home rule.

General Lebed, then, offers Russian nationhood no longer based on imperial domination of other peoples, and also a style of politics no longer mediated by feuding baronial cliques but projected directly from leader to people. That many Russians yearn for this kind of leadership they showed by voting for Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in 1993 and 1995. Not that Lebed is simply another Zhirinovskiy. He is

altogether a more serious political figure, with experience of military command and of imperial proconsulship; he makes warlike remarks, but sometimes follows them up with statesmanlike actions, as Nato discovered this month.

Like Mr Zhirinovskiy, though, General Lebed would lead in a highly authoritarian manner. Politically he favours the free market, backed up by a ruthless campaign against the mafia and tax-dodgers, and he would give priority to creating a reformed, professional army.

President Yeltsin's dismissal of him is a major mistake. One of the most serious he has made. General Lebed will certainly take up the gauntlet, not by mounting an armed coup, which would be self-defeating for a man with his degree of public support, but by leading a national political crusade against the venal politicians, businessmen and security chiefs who surround President Yeltsin.

He is ideally placed to do this, especially if Mr Yeltsin becomes incapable of holding office and if, as seems likely,

the Chechen war erupts again. General Lebed's brief period of high office gives him the necessary status to become the next President, but does not encumber him with the ties of patronage which would reduce him in the public's eyes to being merely another self-seeking politician. We may look back on his dismissal as being the moment when a new style of Russian politics began.

The author is professor of Russian history at the School of Slavonic & East European Studies, University of London.



Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Russian Prime Minister, talks to a general as Igor Rodionov, the Defence Minister, listens at a meeting yesterday

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Grozny tense as residents fear slide back into war

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL
IN GROZNY

CHECHNYA

WITH the removal of General Aleksandr Lebed, the main author of the peace process in Chechnya, residents of Grozny, its capital, are pre-occupied with the threat of a resumption of war.

Outwardly, the city is calm and getting back to normal two months after it was wrecked in the latest round of fighting. Both sides have said they are committed to a continuation of the peace process.

But Lyoma, a young Chechen fighter, was sensing tension from the Russians he now serves with in joint patrols in the city. "I brought these along today," he said, rattling a pile of cartridges in the pocket of his camouflage fatigues. "Lebed was a tough man and now they've got rid of him." Then he made a gesture in the air as though pulling a trigger. "As soon as we have to, we'll do it right away," he said.

Pavel, 19, a Russian conscript at a checkpoint on the edge of the city, was equally pessimistic. General Lebed, he said, understood the army's concerns and had been through combat. But the Moscow politicians did not care what happened to the soldiers. "Ask anyone and they will say that the war will start again," he said.

The main danger perceived in Chechnya is that the peace process was identified with one man and is now a hostage to Moscow politics. Movladi Udugov, the Chechen rebel

information minister, told reporters his republic was now at the centre of a "deadly fight for power".

"After what has happened in Moscow, we are ready for any turn of events," he said. "If war starts tomorrow, we won't be especially surprised. In principle, we are ready for peace and we are ready for war."

Lieutenant-General Valeri Fyodorov, the Russian Deputy Interior Minister, said yesterday that President Yeltsin, not General Lebed, was the ultimate guarantor of the peace agreement. "People come and people go, but the President stays the same," he said. "Questions of war and peace belong to the President and the Government."

But a great many issues in Chechnya are still unresolved, despite the August 31 peace accord. "There are a whole series of issues which could be used to make this thing fall apart if someone wanted it to," said a member of the delegation in Grozny from the Org-



anisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The two sides have so far agreed to disagree over the issue of Chechen independence and have not yet agreed on the form of elections provisionally set for January. The Russians say that they will keep two brigades permanently stationed in the republic. The Chechens say this is unacceptable.

The Chechens are especially worried that Anatoli Kulikov, the Russian Interior Minister, the strongest critic of the peace plan and General Lebed, will now dictate a return to a tough line in Chechnya.

"There will be provocations and attacks from unidentified aeroplanes and helicopters and Kulikov will arrogantly say they were not Russian helicopters and planes," said Aslanbek Ismailov, the commander of Grozny.

The remaining Russian residents of Grozny will also pin their hopes on General Lebed to solve their problems. Most of them want financial compensation to help them to move out. In the city centre, in a wasteland of ruins that resembles a First World War battlefield, General Lebed has set up an office to deal with citizens' requests. On Thursday there was a large crowd of Russians outside. But yesterday General Lebed's representatives had left and his name had been taken down from the door. A new sign said this was now the office of an as-yet unnamed "Permanent Representative" to the Chechen Republic.

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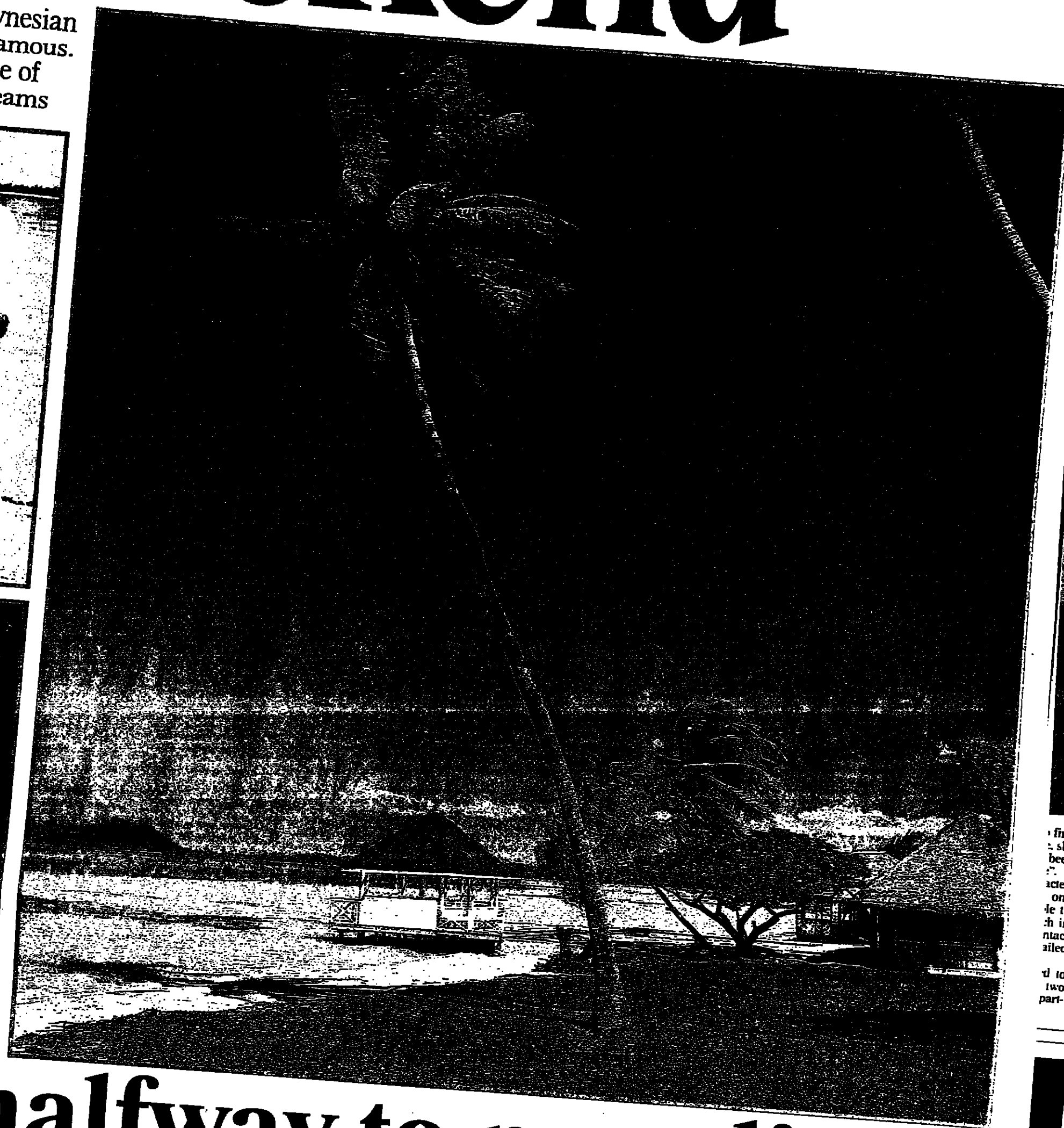
THE TIMES

Weekend

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 19 1996

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For sale: idyllic French Polynesian
hideaway of the rich and famous.
BEN MACINTYRE on the tale of
Tupai, island of broken dreams



Only halfway to paradise

Tupai atoll, one of the most beautiful islands in French Polynesia, may be the nearest thing to a private heaven on earth, a small Garden of Eden that will be auctioned later this month at a starting price of £15 million.

The 2,500-acre ring of coral in the Tahiti archipelago boasts everything to gladden the heart of a reclusive multi-millionaire: 25 miles of golden sand, coconut palms ruffled by gentle tradewinds, abundant wildlife, perfect weather, a turquoise lagoon, its own airstrip and, according to legend, a vast stash of buried pirate treasure.

Brigitte Bardot, Princess Caroline of Monaco and the Duke and Duchess of Kent are among the privileged handful of people to have set foot over the past 30 years on this idyllic preserve, where parrots might disturb a sunbather's reverie but the paparazzi, never.

Yet there is another, more daunting side to this strange and lovely place: Tupai, according to Polynesian legend, is home to lurking spirits, a sacred domain forbidden to humans where con-

demned prisoners were once literally grated to death on the island's sacrificial altar of razor-sharp coral. Over the centuries, men have come seeking fortune and treasure in this Polynesian idyll: all were disappointed and many lives were lost in the quest for its hidden riches, for this island, with its charmed but cruel past, has brought little but ill-fortune to many of those who sought to plunder, possess or exploit it.

The current owner is no exception. On October 31, Maurice Lejeune, the big-spending, free-wheeling but publicity-shy French lawyer and businessman who has run Tupai as a private playground for more than three decades, will sell off his island to the highest bidder. Once one of the richest men in Tahiti, Maître Lejeune's various businesses have run into financial quicksand and his creditors are forcing him to sell. Now 85 and ailing, Maître Lejeune has more reason than most to wonder about the strange spell cast by the atoll as he prepares to surrender a place at once enchanting and cursed.

The tale of Tupai is a saga of

paradise sought and paradise lost. Louis Antoine de Bougainville, the French explorer after whom the climbing plant bougainvillea is named, was the first to record Tupai's dangerous allure. In 1768, in his journal *Voyage around the world on the ship Star*, Bougainville wrote of a "small uninhabited island, covered in fruit trees, wild pigs, birds, teeming with fish and turtles; but the people believe spirits live there; it is their domain, and bad luck follows the boat that by chance or curiosity steers towards this sacred island. It has taken the life of almost all who set foot there."

The atoll is a central element in Polynesian mythology, a sort of purgatory where unquiet ghosts roam — a "tabu", in the Tongan language, from which our word taboo has derived. Among the local inhabitants are the remains of the ancient temples, or "marae", and the terrible slab of coral once used for executions.

Daniel Pardon, a local journalist and historian, says: "The atoll was a sorting-place for the souls of the dead and the Polynesians'

fears of these ghosts, the 'tupapau', would scarcely allow them to set foot on this island. To go to Tupai, one must travel in as possible."

The beliefs may have reflected an early form of ecological awareness. Knowing that the island's rich ecosystem was also extremely fragile and likely to be destroyed by intense human habitation, Tupai was declared off-limits by Polynesian priests.

But by the time De Bougainville arrived, Tupai had already been "discovered" by Europeans who cared nothing for island superstition. When Captain Cook passed by the atoll in 1769, one of his passengers aboard the *Endeavour*, James Morrison, recorded that the few local inhabitants spoke a language different from Polynesian, but oddly akin to Spanish.

These unlikely linguistic fragments may have been left behind by the lost frigate *San Lesmes*, which was dispatched in 1526 to find Ferdinand Magellan, unaware that the great Portuguese

navigator had already been killed by natives in the Philippines.

The *San Lesmes* was thought to have vanished without trace, but modern blood-tests carried out on Easter Islanders in the Pacific have identified a gene that could be traced directly to four Basque sailors, members of the *San Lesmes* crew, from a single village. According to legend some of the lost sailors, after moving from island to island in the Pacific, ended up on Tupai, leaving the traces of their language to intrigue the inquisitive British visitor more than two centuries later.

If the crewmembers from the *San Lesmes* were among the first Europeans to be drawn to the island, they were not the last. Several explorers in the 18th and early 19th centuries recorded the atoll's breathtaking beauty and in January, 1775, a Spanish visitor "Pajaros", or Birds, a tribute to its ornithological riches. But it was not until pirates chose to bury their loot here that Tupai truly began to exercise its fatal attraction. In 1822 the crew of the Chilean warship *Araucano* staged a mutiny and then set

about sacking the coast of Peru, raping, burning and pillaging churches. Weighed down with stolen treasures, the pirates wound up in the Tahiti archipelago where, according to some accounts, they went on a drinking binge that lasted several months.

It was the captain of the pirate vessel who, in an ill-advised moment of confidence, had changed the boat's name to *Providence*. He decided to bury the plunder on Tupai with the intention of getting rid of his motley and drunken crew and then return to reclaim the spoils alone. He never made it back, and the secret of the exact location of the buried South American gold vanished with him. Yet the legend of the Gold of Tupai persisted and soon a series of more or less unsavoury characters began flocking to this treasure island, lured by tales of vast wealth buried beneath the sand.

In the 1880s a particularly nasty pair of adventurers from Belgium, brothers Alexandre and Joseph Rorique, set out to find the hoard. They seized a boat in Tahiti, murdering one of the crew

to keep the rest in line, and headed for Tupai. Having searched the island thoroughly and found nothing, they headed home again, leaving behind an island pockmarked with holes and a death sentence for murder awaiting them in Tahiti.

The Rorique brothers had shown scant respect for the protective gods of Tupai, but the actions of the next El Dorado seeker were still more repugnant. At the end of the 19th century a scoundrel by the name of Blackett, a British citizen originally from Nova Scotia, arrived on the island, bringing with him a machine for extracting coconut oil and a grim determination to find the pirate gold. He may have succeeded, for in an act of remarkable brutality he murdered all 12 local people then working on the island's coconut plantation, apparently in order to silence every witness to his find. Their 12 graves can be found beside the island's road. The dastardly Blackett was arrested and condemned to death but the Queen of the nearby island of

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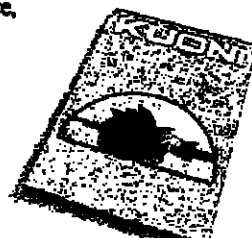
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Chi Kung exercises are supposed to make people more creative, better thinkers, clearer-skinned, thinner, and more sensual. Practitioners also claim that it relieves asthma

Enjoy the China syndrome

I can't believe it. After years of trying to hold my stomach in, here is a woman telling me to let it out. Sue Weston is a Chi Kung teacher and my latest guru. This week, she is teaching me and others at The Health Club in Isleworth how to breathe, the Chinese way. "What?" said my husband, incredulous. "Why do you need to be taught how to breathe?"

Why indeed. In fact, correct breathing is not something we are very good at. "Most people only breathe using the top half of their lungs. They are like goldfish gasping for air. Your breath should be coming from what the Chinese call the *dan-tien*, about four centimetres below the navel, where our energy comes from," Ms Weston says.

The game is to breathe from your abdomen by letting your stomach extend like a balloon as you breathe in. Thus my slack belly, it seems simple. But in China students spend up to year learning the trick. It's diffi-

cult because, unsurprisingly, I had never thought about my breathing before and, in concentrating on it, I tried too hard. So my breaths were noisily obvious, whereas the idea is that the breath should be "silent and like silk", Ms Weston says.

"If the breath is noisy, you are expending too much energy. This should be about reducing effort and giving you more, not less energy." This is what you do to achieve "the abdominal breath". Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart, your knees slightly bent. Relax your shoulders and jaw. Imagine a string runs from the top of your head to the ceiling, holding you upright but not rigid. Place your hands gently over your stomach, below your navel. Relax your buttocks. Take in a slow, steady breath through your nose, allowing your stomach to swell like a balloon. Hold the breath gently. Then exhale, allowing the breath to come out slowly through your nose as your stomach subsides.

ALTERNATIVELY SPEAKING...

by
RACHEL KELLY



CHI KUNG

Here's what happened to me. My breathing slowed. I had a sense of reaching down and connecting with my whole body. I calmed down and felt a warm glow of energy. Yes, I really did, especially once I'd practised. (Better breathing is particularly good for those prone to panic attacks.)

"Chi" means "vital energy" in Chinese, while "Kung" means work (and it is). "It's hardly surprising you feel more energetic," Ms Weston says. "You've swapped all the air inside your lungs, instead of just replacing the top slice, so the air is fresh rather than stale. And this new oxygenated air is being picked up by your bloodstream, energising all your organs." You do well to visualise health-giving energy flood-

ing in as you inhale and spent energy pouring out as you exhale. Nor are you wasting energy keeping all those muscles tight.

You should also feel more creative, because true creativity comes from the whole, not just one's brain, Ms Weston says. But why?

"It's to do with greater self-awareness, about being comfortable with your whole body," she says. "Our bodies aren't just a vehicle to carry our minds around." Ms Weston guided us through more exercises which help us to breathe properly. This second one helps breathing by stretching the lower stomach. Lie on the floor, bring your feet close into your

FACT FILE

■ **CHI KUNG**
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exercises, including one which opened up the back to allow greater lung capacity and helped reduce shoulder tension.

The Chinese have been soothed by Chi Kung for thousands of years. It is practised daily by millions from office clerks to cabinet ministers. Breathing is combined with other exercises to aid total well-being. But it is relatively new to the West. Ms Weston has been practising in Britain for a decade. In theory, the dedicated will become more creative, better thinkers, clearer-skinned, thinner, and more sensual. Practitioners claim Chi Kung will relieve hypertension and help heart complaints and even cancer, and it is good for asthma sufferers.

So does it work? It worked in class, but you have to practise for at least five minutes daily for longer-term effects. Unsurprisingly, the more you put in, the more in theory, you will achieve.

SPECIALISTS

- The Health Club, Administration, 8 St John's Court, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 6PA (0181-758 1996), £7-£10 for 1½ hour class, £65 for ten classes.
- The Central Club, 16-22 Great Russell Street, London WC1. Contact: Michael Tse (0161-929 4485), £7 an hour.
- Friends Institute, 220 Moseley Rd, Highgate, Birmingham. Contact: David Poon (0121-443 1828), £6 for 1 hour.
- GPO Social Club, Deansgate, Manchester. Contact: Michael Tse (0161-929 4485), £7 for 1 hour.
- For Chi Kung teachers in the North, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, contact: Tse Qigong Centre, PO Box 116, South PO, Manchester M20 3YN (0161-929 4485), £67 for 1 hour.

SERIOUS SHOPPING

by
GILES COREN



Hardware

My father used to take me to a see a magician most Saturday mornings. His name was Sydney Venning. "Watch this," my dad would whisper. "Morning Sydney, can I have a quarter pound of galvanised roofing clouts, please." And the old man in the brown overalls would fill his hand with nails, and shuffle them like peanuts.

He would let them drop from his hand, one at a time, then deposit the handful on the scales and watch as the four ounce weight balanced perfectly horizontal on the other side. Then I would pick up one tiny clout and drop it on top of the pile, to make the brass tray lower it self gently down, heavier now than the iron weight on the other side. If you needed 17 "X" brand No.4 picture hooks he could do it, first time, with the dip of a hand. Twenty-two yards of green garden twine? He would roll it off the ball without breaking eye contact, and snip it with a Stanley knife. Venning is gone now, and so are most of those cavernous old shops and their high drawers full of superannuated nails, and their smell of turps and metal buckets (for metal buckets do smell). But in autumn a man still gets that feeling in his bones, when things suddenly need nailing, grouting, sweeping and lighting.

So thank God for Robert Dyas. Nothing has changed in there since the 1970s — it is the only place, surely, where you can still buy Soda Stream concentrates (Tizer flavour). Sure, there is nothing very X-Files about six metres of Spantex Drip Strip for £3.99 or a kidney-coloured General Purpose PVC gauntlet (£2.50). But where else would you find a Hedgehog Boot Scrub (£29.95), a Schulte Bean Slicer (£9.95), and six-pack of Pimpel British Heritage placemats featuring assorted views (£16.95) all

in the same small store? All life is here. You can get a soulless Vileda mop, or you can pay £9.95 for a steel mop bucket for that authentic retro feel. After an ersatz olde worlde hurricane lamp? Do not be put off by the £30 price tag in the Conran Shop — the Chalwyn Tropic, a classic of its kind, is yours at R.D. for 5p short of a tenner.

You can go mad at Robert Dyas (indeed you always go mad at Robert Dyas) and yet never really damage your wallet. Take an average spree: a four-pack of barbecue skewers, eight-piece frozen pops set, a kilo of Miracle-Gro, a box of Vitax Pepper Dust "the simple and effective way to deter cats and dogs", and a 5-in-1 multi-purpose Tupperware set, and the whole caboodle comes to only £13.56. You carry that lot around, by the way, in the big black plastic bucket (£3.25). Then you can get a pair of pliers, one of those bendy screwdrivers handy for screwing around corners, a Stay-

In autumn a man gets a feeling in his bones that things suddenly need some grouting, sweeping and nailing

well pet door, half a litre of mastic, a ball of string, a Little Nipper mousetrap, and a bag of spirit salts, all for the price of Mr McGregor's Wooden Bird Table with Beatrix Potter illustration on the box (£34.95).

The Dyas marketing trick is to fill the shop with useful things — like letterbox flaps (£6.95), six-piece combination spanner sets in chrome vanadium steel (£9.95), and anti-killer liquid in bright red zip-guns (£4.95) — so as to fool you into thinking that everything in the shop is equally useful.

And you never leave feeling guilty. You walk home in your conker-coloured boots and your Irish fishing sweater feeling solid and chunky. Next week you can fill the damp cupboard under the stairs with lined oil, 3-in-1, Antiquax, and WD40. You have to spread it out, there are only six more shopping Saturdays in autumn.

"The buyers must contend with the watchful spirits"

Continued from page 1

Bora Bora, unwilling to execute a British citizen and incur Her Britannic Majesty's wrath, banished him instead.

Blackett, knowing that to return to the island would be to court summary death, may have passed on the secret of the buried gold to a sailor named Brown. Captain Brown's claims to know the whereabouts of the cache were sufficient to inspire yet another expedition. In 1932 a 20-strong team of explorers left New York aboard the yacht *Genesee* in the certain belief that the treasure would be found beneath Tupai's largest stone temples. Based on no hard evidence, the value of the hoard was officially estimated at £20 million. A film company invested £130,000 in the project and the Brown Exploration Co. was filmed blowing up the remains of the temple with dynamite. The vandals left with little except bone fragments and a huge debt.

But the treasure-hunters kept coming. In 1953, an Australian named Robert J. Cunningham, who had lived for some 24 years on Tupai, declared that he had never found the slightest trace of any precious metals on the atoll. He recalled, however, spending much of the last two decades chasing would-be gold-diggers out of



Treasure hunters gave the island a turbulent past

the coconut groves. In the 1960s the island became the property of Maurice Lejeune, a rich French lawyer living in Tahiti. He set about transforming his acquisition into the ultimate luxury island hideaway. He brought in electricity generators and television, built comfortable accommodation and created an airstrip. The lawyer worked to protect the natural flora and fauna, but his efforts were not enough to satisfy Tupai's environmentally-minded but not over-friendly ghosts.

Maitre Lejeune is described as living a "sumptuous" lifestyle between Tupai and Tahiti, 150 miles away, where he ran an extensive series of business operations in addition to his legal work. Selected members of the international jet set, film stars and royalty were allowed to make use of the island, but Maitre Le-

jeune himself lived a withdrawn, even mysterious existence, not unlike that of Marlon Brando, the American actor who took up hermitic residence on Tahiti, another island near Tahiti.

Maintaining an island utopia fit for Brigitte Bardot is not cheap. By the mid-1980s Maitre Lejeune was looking to sell. A Japanese businessman began negotiations, possibly to set up a Las Vegas-style resort offering tax-free gambling to wealthy Japanese tourists. The price was said to have been set at £35 million, but protestors from Bora Bora objected violently to the sale of what they claimed were ancestral lands and the deal fell through.

Maitre Lejeune's many business dealings have not made him universally popular in Tahiti. One Tahiti resident said: "He could have quietly built his fortune and taken advantage of Tupai at weekends and in retirement." Following a series of ill-fated investments, Maitre Lejeune's financial difficulties multiplied dramatically and this year his creditors finally stepped in to repossess the island and force its sale. Maitre Lejeune will not discuss the auction of his most prized possession. "He is too stressed," says his son. The island, currently home to some 20 labourers

and their families, will be sold in two lots, one of 1,750 acres at a starting price of £11 million and the other of 750 acres at £4 million. Auctioneers predict that the long-enduring pirate legend will drive the bidding up, since there is always the possibility that by discovering the cache of ancient Peruvian gold the purchase price could

be wiped out at a stroke, leaving enough left over for the all-important private plane. But before that can happen, the buyer or buyers must first contend with the ancient guardians of the island and its treasure trove, the watchful spirits of Tupai.

• Additional reporting by Daniel Pardon

Death knel for Bluebells?

(Still quite common, but for how long?)

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Karl Miller, *The Observer*

le Carré

THE TAILOR OF PANAMA

"le Carré shows what an extraordinarily witty writer he can be...spectacularly funny"
Marcel Berlins, *The Sunday Times*

"a book about legends and lies, about great loves and little betrayals, about the myth of truth and the consequences of deception. As such it is a work of rare brilliance"
Peter Millar, *The Times*

"an excoriating denunciation of hypocritical diplomacy, opportunistic high politics and exploitative journalism which explodes in an apocalyptic climax"
Gerald Kaufman, *Sunday Telegraph*

OUT NOW

Hodder & Stoughton

Cover photographs of Brigitte Bardot and Princess Caroline of Monaco by Rex
Island photographs on cover and this page by Pacific Promotion/Teva Sylvian

Found – the missing slink



Dusky pink catsuit, £150, from Whistles, branches nationwide (0171-487 4484)



Mauve crepe dress with silver straps, £79, from Kookai, branches nationwide (0171-937 4411)



Lux-tux dressing has become affordable as high street chains experiment with new and ever-more extraordinary fabric mixes. This cream silk jersey shirt costs £59, from Kookai. Wear it open low for maximum 1970s effect

The bare, spare but luxurious Halston look is back in the high street. **GRACE BRADBERRY** reports

Fashion is set in a retro groove at the moment, with designers replaying 1970s tunes. One of the more welcome looks to slink out of the attic is that of Halston-inspired evening-wear.

Roy Halston Frowick was an American designer, famed for his perfect cutting and immaculate stitching. He used to hang out at Studio 54, the legendary New York nightclub, with Bianca Jagger, Martha Graham, and Liza Minnelli, all of whom wore his clothes.

The look was bare, spare but luxurious: columns of matte silk jersey and slinky-minky evening gowns with plunging necklines. Halston died in 1990, and Studio 54 closed in May this year. But even before its doors closed, fashion was rediscovering it.

So great is the obsession that there is even a film in the pipeline – *The Last Days of Disco* – which is clearly based on the Manhattan nightspot.

But the most influential figure in the Halston revival is Tom Ford, the American designer who now heads Gucci. In his autumn/winter '96 catwalk show, he re-created the entire look. His distinctive dresses, which drape from gold torques, or clinch around gold rings, at the back and front, have brought the high-glamour of the era flooding back.

The svelte pilot shirts, and satin pant-suits beloved of the 1970s jet-set are also enjoying a revival but many people won't remember the 1970s quite as Ford does.

His imagination is firmly fixed at Studio 54, where what you wore on the dance floor was just as important as who you were.

Designer names really did matter, because in the 1970s cheap imitations were nothing like the real thing. Life was simply not glamorous if one had to wear nylon. Sparks would fly on the dance floor, but they would be genuine electrical ones, created as the synthetic fibres built up a mighty charge. This time it's different. Lux-tux dressing has become affordable, as high street chains experiment with new and ever more extraordinary fabric mixes.

Once, a body-hugging dress with plunging neckline and halter-neck would have

been a disaster in anything but matte silk jersey. Now Kookai, Morgan and Warehouse can come up with nylon versions that are not a million miles from the Gucci designs they are imitating.

The labels in high street clothes now tell an extraordinary tale. The Whistles all-in-one shown here, which would not have looked out of place at Studio 54, is made from 50 per cent acetate and 50 per cent llama, an ingenious blend of cool wool and a synthetic textile. Indeed, artificial fibres are the big fashion story of the mid-1990s. *Time* magazine has just devoted seven pages to the subject, examining how leading designers now use sophisticated polyesters, acetates and neoprene. Even Oscar de la Renta, the designer who made his name

using silk, is quoted as saying: "I'm plunging all the way into viscose." Many of the leading names, including Helmut Lang and Romeo Gigli, have created futuristic looks. In the high street, however, the focus is far more on harnessing technology to produce alternatives to natural fibres.

Morgan, the French-based chain, has its own textile development unit to produce fabrics that will imitate high-fashion for a fraction of the price. "To do that we sometimes have to develop fibres on our own," Ruth Jones of Morgan says. "Micro-fibres in particular have been successful this winter."

The chain has been able to produce black body-hugging jersey dresses, with built-in gold rings, that capture Tom Ford's predatory, feline look. Inevitably, technology cannot quite match the beauty of real silk jersey. But the use of different finishes, and the addition of Lycra, can give synthetic knits a sheen and a stretch that come close.

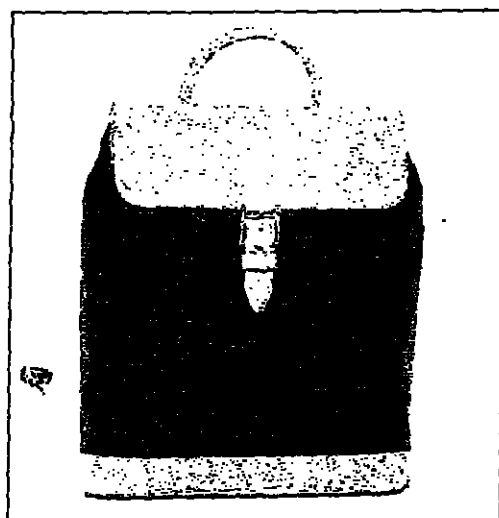
Even so, the Halston look is not for everyone. Cut-away shapes can reveal areas best kept covered, and even expensive jerseys cling to every bump and bulge.

Photographer: Steve Poole
Photographer's assistant: Suzy Campbell
Hair/make-up: Helen Bannon
Model: Emma-Louise at Elite
Fashion assistant: Bola Stwoku
Over The Hill sofa, £1,200, from Furniture Union (46 Beak St W1, 0171-287 3424)

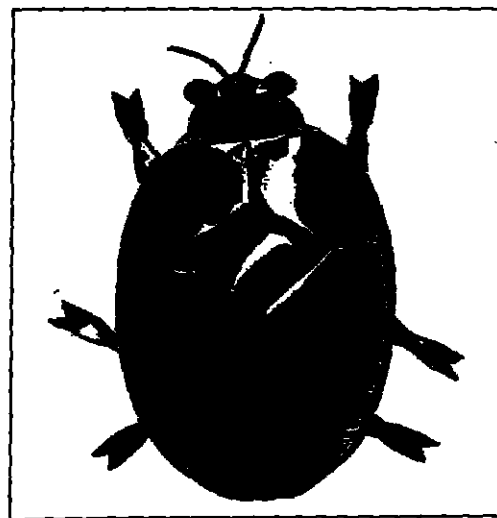
The look is not for everyone because expensive jerseys cling to every bump and bulge

START THE WINTER WITH BAGS OF STYLE

The explosion of styles and colours this autumn in leather, suede and nylon means that everyone can afford to indulge. **EMMA MAHONY** looks at the best of bags bold and beautiful



LOUIS VUITTON
Louis Vuitton launched its new Damier canvas last month as a limited edition. This Arquin backpack costs £525 from Louis Vuitton, 149 New Bond Street, London W1 (0800 393304 for mail order).



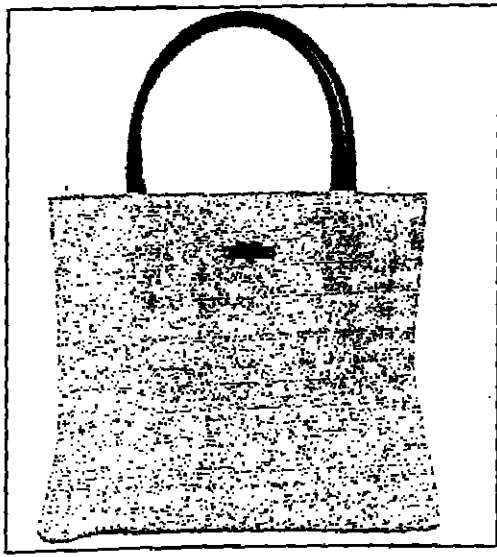
REDWALL
This beetle rucksack (£50) is designed to cling to your back while its legs flap around your shoulders. From Redwall at Harvey Nichols, 109-125 Knightsbridge, London SW1 (stockists on 0171-245 9189).



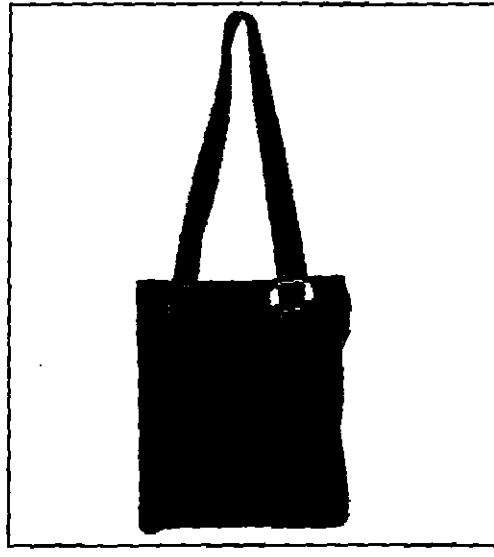
MOSCHINO
Shopper bag in orange leather with green stitching (£388). Available in four other colours. Moschino Boutique at Harvey Nichols, 109-125 Knightsbridge, London SW1 (stockists on 0171-245 9188).



GUCCI
Gucci's autumn collection includes the "ironing board" rucksack (£430), now in green, lime, orange, rust, black, white, chocolate and blue. Gucci, 33 Old Bond Street, London W1 (stockists on 0171-629 2716).



MORGAN
Morgan's Nylon Shopper (£39.99) also comes in black, chocolate and green. It is a copy of Prada's nylon shopper, right down to the silver logo, but at a quarter of the price (stockists on 0171-436 5255).



RUSSELL & BROMLEY
Russell & Bromley's unashamedly 1970s purple suede bag (£125) comes with matching boots (£195). Russell & Bromley, 24/25 New Bond Street, London W1 (stockists on 0171-629 8903).

MULTI-VITAMINS

Are you making the right choice?

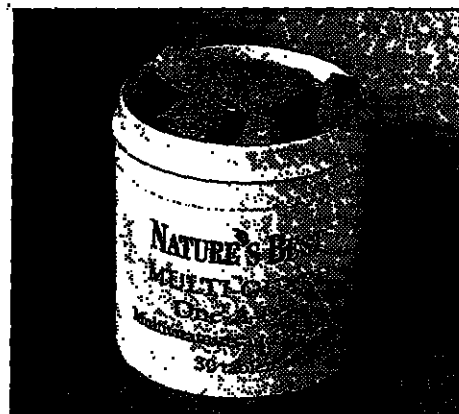
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Vitamin C	150mg	30mg
Vitamin D3	10µg	2.5µg
Vitamin E	100iu	5iu
Calcium	150mg	2.5mg
Phosphoric Acid	50mg	NIL
Choline	25mg	NIL
Folic Acid	400µg	300µg
Niacin (Nicotinic Acid)	100mg	30mg
Inositol	25mg	NIL
Iron	25mg	NIL
Copper	2mg	NIL
Chromium	200µg	NIL
Iodine	150µg	NIL
Manganese	10mg	2.5mg
Selenium	5mg	NIL
Molybdenum	500µg	NIL
Silicon	200µg	NIL
Zinc	15mg	NIL



As a special introductory offer, Multi-Guard is now available at £2.40 for 30 tablets (Normal Price £6.95). That's just over 11p per day, hardly more than the much lower potency brands in the high street. Offer limited to two pots per household.

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It's a breeze on the 39th floor



On a clear day: fine view of the City from the 39th-floor terrace



Listening in: the smaller reception area is wired for a music system



Lounging around: reception/dining area opens out on to a landscaped terrace and is suitable for entertaining — and impressing — large numbers of guests

HOME OF THE WEEK

The Penthouse, 39th-41st floor, Lauderdale Tower, The Barbican, London EC2 • Price: about £750,000 • Travel: Barbican tube across the road. City Airport less than half an hour away on a good day. On a bad day, don't even think about it • Shopping: Jermyn Street-style men's shops near by. Women, get in a cab and head to Knightsbridge. Marks and Sparks have a food hall at Moorgate • Entertainment: A short ride down 39 floors in the lift will take you to the Barbican Arts Centre. This weekend choose from the RSC's *As You Like It*, the LSO playing Beethoven and Mozart, plus exhibitions and films • If you like long walks, but not on pavements, head for your country estate • Service charge: £8,870 for 1994/95

It is easy to dismiss penthouses as top-floor flats with delusions of grandeur and a price tag available on application. But to call the 2,344 square feet atop a tower block at the Barbican in London a mere flat would be like describing Spencer House as a pied à terre.

What you get for £750,000 (or nearest offer) is three storeys, with acres of windows, perched in splendid isolation on the 39th floor. If you only want to flaunt your equity to invited guests this is for you: no neighbours, no rubberneckers peering through the security gates, no "property is theft" graffiti sprayed on your garden wall — unless modern revolutionaries have access to a helicopter and are willing to die for the cause. Anonymity is total, security good.

Having taken my shoulder to the vault-like Lauderdale Tower main door, my mission was to negotiate my way past the porter who controls the entryphone and security camera outside the garage. Give the right answers and you gain access to the lifts.

City of London skyline and beyond, with tiny church spires tucked between the glass towers: a high-octane star of the money markets who thinks commuting is for wimps will reach his office in less time than it takes a derivatives trader to lose a million, leaving his motor in one of the three parking bays reserved for him in the private underground garage.

Penthouses are a specialist market, rarely bought by nesters looking for "cosy", but neither do they have to be futuristic aircraft hangars of in-your-face flash. The owner (a music-loving, neural financier) has cleverly kept the refurbishment neutral and understated — a blank canvas on which the buyers can easily stamp their personality.

I can now well understand how living at the top, in the best of its kind, can become an expensive habit: hence the financier hopes, I gather, to move into another penthouse, perhaps a little larger, with a view of the river.

The green theme extends to the marble and dark green tiled main bathroom, mercifully free of gold fittings and Jacuzzi, just classic white porcelain his-and-her basins, enough shelving to hold the annual production of French fragrance houses, a power shower and a bath big enough to warrant a lifejacket.

This was turning out to be my kind of property. And it is not all formal areas where you might feel compelled to get dolled up in designer gear and full make-up just to read the Sunday papers. There are a few havens to slob in after a hard day of boardroom coups. The third bedroom has been converted into a small study/TV room

with a huge sofa where you can relax enough not to worry if coffee gets spilt or you accidentally squash a Belgian chocolate into the cushions.

The second reception area houses a state-of-the-art stereo system with speakers as large as room dividers, and the third floor has been transformed into a conservatory. We are not talking a few pots of stringy geraniums and two bamboo chairs here — this is a 20ft by 10ft Kew-like micro eco-system of palms and ferns with a tinkling "water feature" and Welsh slate floor, plus sunbathing terrace (with sound system, phone and entryphone, should be in-

communicado in a small section of Central American forest make you tense). To stop any feeling of being sealed in the Mir space station — and I did find the total silence almost unnerving — each floor has a terrace, two of them landscaped (the word patio is not used in the same breath as penthouse and personally I do not move in circles where large balconies are professionally landscaped). As it tends to get breezy in the stratosphere, terraces two and three have high walls. You lose the view but the plants and hairstyles survive. These are pretty, walled gardens big enough for alfresco meals, and the distant hum of traffic was rather comforting. At night, with many of the buildings floodlit, you have your own personal *City son et lumière*. Terrace one is much smaller but has a chest-high wall and uninterrupted view.

'As it tends to get windy so high up, the terraces have high walls. The view is lost but plants and hairdos survive'

READER OFFER AND COMPETITION THE TIMES

WIN A DREAM HOLIDAY TO SOUTH AFRICA WORTH £6,000

PLUS save £1 on a bottle of Amarula Cream

The Times, in association with Amarula, offers you the chance to win an exciting two-week holiday for two in South Africa and Botswana worth £6,000. Also, every reader aged over 18 can get £1 off a bottle of Amarula, a new and delicious cream liqueur. The holiday includes a safari, trips to Table Mountain or Victoria Falls, boat rides, fishing, relaxing by luxurious pools in four-star hotels — and £1,000 spending money.

HOW TO ENTER. For a chance to win the £6,000 holiday you must answer two questions. The first is below and another will appear on Monday with the competition entry form.

The fruit of the wild marula tree is famous for which quality?
a) curing headaches
b) as an aphrodisiac
c) preventing mosquito bites



AMARULA is a cream liqueur with a distinctive fruity-toffee taste, made from the fruit of the wild marula tree which grows on the plains of southern Africa. Locally it is known as the Marriage Tree as the fruits are prized for their aphrodisiac qualities and have for centuries played a part in ancient fertility rites. The juice is distilled in copper pots and matured for three years in oak barrels then the spirit is blended with stabilised cream. To enjoy Amarula at its best serve it chilled or pour it over ice cream. Amarula is available in the UK from leading supermarkets and off licences at around £11 a bottle but Times readers can take advantage of a £1 off voucher to be published on Monday*.

*Offer not available in Eire or Channel Islands

PROPERTY NEWS

Alexei moves in, Victoria sells up

ALEXEI SAYLE, the comedian who recently appeared in the BBC2 series *Great Railway Journeys of the World*, has bought an apartment at Tanners Yard, a clutch of Victorian buildings and new warehouse-style flats at Bermondsey Market, near Tower Bridge in east London.

According to agents Cluttons (0171-407 3669), the madcap Liverpudlian paid around £150,000 for his two-bedroom flat in Market House, a converted Victorian building. The flat has a 26ft by 17ft living room, original cast-iron colonettes, arched windows, exposed brickwork and underground car parking.

Biographer Victoria Glendinning is selling her cottage in Kentish Town, north London

through John D. Wood (0171-722 5556). Davis Cottage, on offer at £425,000, is hidden away down a leafy private lane. It has three bedrooms, a bathroom, shower room, reception, dining room, kitchen and cloakroom and is set behind a walled west-facing garden.

Lord Barber, the Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer between 1970 and 1974, is selling the house in Montpelier Square, London SW7, which has been his home for the past 35 years. There is a ground-floor dining room and a 26ft-long first-floor drawing room. The top floor was designed by Barber himself some 20 years ago, and incorporates Egyptian friezes. Agents W.A. Ellis are asking £1.3 million for the house.

THE PLANNING system is holding up further recovery in the housing market, says the House Builders' Federation, the builders' lobby group. Roger Humber, the federation's director, complains that applications to develop land are held up for longer than the eight weeks which the Government recommends. So the number of new homes being built this year is down by 8 per cent, which means that those wishing to buy a new home may well be frustrated.

Royal request

THE PRINCE OF WALES has asked for planning permission to go ahead with building the 72-hectare second phase of Poundbury, his traditional village on the outskirts of Dorchester in west Dorset.

The first phase consisted of 180 homes, most of which have been sold. The second phase, which will lie to the west and northwest of the town, will include 40 hectares

of parkland and 32 hectares that can be developed for housing and offices.

The new development has been masterminded by the classical architect Leon Krier. The hope is to create a natural urban pattern of roads rather than a suburban layout of straight, characterless streets.

West Dorset District Council is currently inspecting the plans.



The Prince of Wales tours Poundbury, west Dorset

KNIGHT FRANK (0171-629 8171) is asking £1.5 million for St George's Vineyard in East Sussex, one of the UK's best-known vineyards, which supplies wine to the House of Commons. Set in 37 acres with 20 acres of mature vines, it includes a 17th-century Grade II listed six-bedroom house, an 11th-century tithe barn, a purpose-built winery, restaurant, shop and wine-making equipment.

I'm the urban spaceman

PETER TRIEVNIOR



Architect Jason Cooper in the open-plan flat he designed. Artful devices such as the bath under the bed, plus careful use of materials, maximise the feeling of light and space

Architect Jason Cooper turned a client's dark and cramped flat into an airy, stylish city pad, writes RACHEL KELLY. How? To begin with, by slotting the bath underneath a sliding bed

Nothing prepares you for what lies ahead when you ring the bell of an insalubrious Victorian terraced building off Westbourne Grove in west London and ascend the narrow, tread-worn staircase. Open the door of the second-floor flat and you enter an oasis of calm and space belied by its entrance.

The floor area measures just 17ft by 28ft, into which were originally crammed an unlit internal hall, a thin kitchen, a bathroom, sitting room and bedroom. Now the flimsy partition walls have been demolished in favour of one space which ingeniously provides for all the needs of the flat's owner, 41-year-old cartoonist and artist Sue McCartney-Snape.

"It was previously very depressing, lacking in light and extremely claustrophobic," Ms McCartney-Snape says. "Now I can adjust the flat according to how I wish to use it, night or day."

At one end is the living area, with an unobtrusive Ikea kitchen in birch tucked into a corner. Architect Jason Cooper has raised the units on a white plinth to allow the kitchen to "float" free of the floor level. This device also prevents dirt from collecting in that inevitable gap between floor and units.

Topped in solid beech, the units stand proud of the wall — which means there is no need for wall tiles and no prospect of grime collecting behind the units, which are easy to wipe clean.

While the kitchen table came from Ms McCartney-Snape's previous flat, the sofa comes from Habitat. Its white cover adds to the general impression of space and light. The windows are simply dressed in slatted blinds. "Everything in the flat emphasises the horizontal rather than the vertical, which makes things look bigger," explains Mr Cooper. The blinds occupy less space than bulky curtains and allow light to flood in, while the fireplace is enclosed in a horizontal slab of oak — again to draw the eye sideways.

The floors are made of reclaimed pitch pine finished with a matt seal, which gives them a pleasantly worn feel and a richness of colour which saves the room from any suggestion of Scandinavian iciness.

The living area is divided from the sleeping area by a waist-high partition which doubles as a bookshelf. Tucked behind it is a desk on a higher platform that overlooks the living space. This platform includes the flat's chief innovation: a bed on rails that can be slid into the desk area, thereby revealing a bath beneath it. Such an arrangement also allows for a large recessed "deck" area on either side of the bath to accommodate the



The living area incorporates a corner kitchen with "floating" units

usual paraphernalia of plastic ducks, shampoo and so forth.

The layered approach neatly solves the problem of making such a small space fulfil so many functions. "And it means that my bathroom is actually very large,

instead of being a tiny box," Ms McCartney-Snape says.

The bath also incorporates an underwater light, which catches the ripples in the water to project an ever-changing tracery of dappled light on to the ceiling and walls. A

discreet extractor fan deals with the condensation, while modesty is ensured by a blind — matching the window blinds — which can be lowered to conceal the raised area.

And what of that bugbear of all tiny flats: storage? In this case, a vast area of hatch-accessed space is concealed beneath the floor.

Extra drawers for Ms McCartney-Snape's drawings are fitted into the steps that lead to the upper areas of the flat. The sliding bed is equipped with large drawers underneath, and the thick walls by the windows conceal cupboards and a miniature basin.

The flat cost £57,000 and Ms McCartney-Snape has probably spent some £25,000 renovating and remodelling the interior. She almost certainly bought a bargain: a local estate agent recently valued the flat at £125,000.

Prescient readers will have noticed one omission so far. What of a lavatory? This has been fitted in under the stairs leading to the upper floors, in a cramped space which once housed the meters.

"There is a nice contrast between the openness of the flat and the tiny, Alice-in-Wonderland feel to the lavatory," Mr Cooper says. The lavatory is deliberately finished with raw wall plaster to give it a womb-like feel.

● Jason Cooper Architects: 0171-727 3104.

Our little wooden house in the wilderness

Goodbye bricks and mortar. A new timber home is cheaper, warmer and more romantic

Blair and Pauline Wheeler captured on video the arrival of their new home, delivered in two halves on a low-loader and manoeuvred into place by crane in a precise, well-practised operation.

For them the timber lodge, on a site bordering Scottish woodland, represents the start of a new life eight months after Mr Wheeler, formerly a director with a large brewery, was made redundant at the age of 50.

"We had always said we would like to retire to the area in Perthshire where we spent our holidays. When a new job did not materialise, we decided to make the move earlier," Mr Wheeler says.

Because they planned to buy a flat or small house outright, before the sale of their home in England, house-hunting in their £45,000 price range was difficult. "The owner of the park where our holiday caravan was sited said he had a plot for a permanent home and suggested that we looked at the neighbouring timber lodge," Mr Wheeler says. After a tour of the lodge and a visit to the Derbyshire headquarters of its suppliers, Pinelog, the Wheelers decided to buy a tailor-made three-bedroom lodge for £47,500.

During the 1980s, many single-storey timber houses were sold as second homes, sited either on holiday parks or on private land,



Home haulage: half of Blair and Pauline Wheeler's house arrives on a low-loader. Right: the couple admire their new residence in the Perthshire countryside where they once spent summer holidays

subject to planning permission. As their popularity as holiday homes grew, so did the number of people choosing to live in them permanently.

Most timber homes comply with the statutory legal and planning definition of a caravan but, with minor alterations, can be built to comply with full building regulation standards. Potential owners must apply for planning permission from local authorities before siting their home, unless it falls within the ambit of "permitted development".

One elderly widow was allowed to site a lodge in the grounds of

her daughter's house, enabling her to retain an independent home close to her family.

A handful of companies in the UK supply timber homes, including those which import "kits" from Scandinavia. Paula Skelton, the sales manager of Pinelog, which began manufacturing timber lodges almost 20 years ago, says: "In some areas permission can be difficult to obtain. But in many locations a timber home is more suitable than a brick house."

Many customers say their timber home "represents a dream", she says. "These lodges have a certain charm, a different at-

mosphere from a brick house. They conjure up an image of the pioneering spirit, of log cabins. There is a touch of romance linked in there, too."

Pinelog's lodges are built from Scandinavian redwood. Because all the external timbers are treated against rot and infestation, they should last a lifetime. Most timber homes include high levels of insulation as well as double glazing, and many owners comment on their warmth. Electric panel heaters are fitted as standard.

Although there are several

standard designs, the lodges are made individually to incorporate customers' particular needs and wishes. Mr and Mrs Wheeler asked for two of their three bedrooms to be larger than standard size and the third, which they plan to use as a utility and store room, smaller.

Pinelog's lodges range from a 25ft by 20ft two-bedroom lodge at £24,900, plus £3,200 for the furnishing pack, to a 46ft by 20ft four-bedroom lodge with two bathrooms at £41,000 plus £5,230 for furnishings. Delivery is extra and usually costs between £1,500 and £2,500.

Farmer Adam Hurst and his

partner Jackie Smith, both 28, and their eight-month-old daughter Yasmin share a three-bedroom timber home which is hidden from public view to comply with planning consent conditions. Sited on Mr Hurst's father's 300-acre dairy farm near Stoke on Trent, their 20ft-by-36ft house has a surrounding verandah and cannot be seen even from the nearest country lane.

Simon and Lou Savage's timber home overlooks the river at Stratford-upon-Avon, built on five-foot-high pillars to escape flooding, on land they bought initially to use as a garden.

Their individually-designed

house, with two bathrooms and large patio windows, cost around £50,000. "When we bought the land there was an old wood-and-asbestos holiday home on it and planners gave us permission to build a new property," says Mr Savage. "I had always wanted to live in a wooden house — I like the idea of having a verandah all round. It's very economical and in a great location. We can go shopping in town by boat up the river to avoid parking problems."

LYNNE GREENWOOD
● Pinelog, Riverside Works, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1GS (01639 814481).

Late developer makes its debut in the colour purple

Colchicums, those woodland perennials with cheerful flowers, brighten up autumn, says **STEPHEN ANDERTON**

Just when you think woodland perennials are over and there is only autumn leaf colour to look forward to, out come the colchicums — great clumps of crocus-like flowers, in glowing rosy purples, mauve and white, rising leafless from the ground.

I left all mine behind in Northumberland, and so jumped at the chance to buy some in Saffron Walden market at the beginning of September. In the dry state they are the oddest plants. Technically they are corms rather than bulbs and look like large, deformed tulip skins with their shiny brown skins. Big ones can be the size of a small fist, and the offsets when you divide them only the size of a snowdrop.

They have this odd lump at the bottom, the foot, from which springs all activity during growth. You can bring a large dry corm to flowering by placing it on a sunny windowsill, on a saucer with no soil, such is the reserve of energy and moisture in the corm. The bulbs I bought had already begun to develop the bud in its sheath alongside the bulb, and I took great care not to damage it, because through that sheath will come the leaves in spring.

Colchicums are not dormant for long. The great floppy leaves appear in spring but do not die down until June. The yellowing foliage flourishes around for ever, a dying diva refusing to leave the stage. Once everything is quiet, that is the time to divide them and spread them around the garden before new roots or shoots appear with the autumn rains and cooler nights.

Some colchicums are tougher than others. The bigger, common species, such as *Colchicum autumnale*,



Colchicums give late colour

nale, *C. speciosum* and their hybrids, will stand lifting in flower. Most of my Northumbrian plants came from the mother of a farmer friend, who would turn up with a bucket-load lifted in full flower, and they were never any the worse for that. Ted Bullock is head gardener for the National Trust at Felbrigg Hall in Norfolk. He looks after a National Collection of colchicums that includes 38 species and 25 cultivars. He disapproves of moving them in flower, but then he is dealing with the smaller, difficult species as well as the large, easy ones.

The smaller species are less generous. They flower with less concentration, in dribs and drabs. Some come in July when their colour is a less precious commodity. Some wait until spring to flower. And all in all they require more attention. Mr Bullock grows them in pots and troughs, where he can care for them easily. The easier, bigger colchicums are set out in demonstration beds, where visitors can compare colours and performance. He also has long borders of the species *C. tenorei* running purple under box hedges for the thousand in September. The garden at Felbrigg (01263 837444) is open until November 23. When I see col-

chicums in the wild (usually *C. autumnale*) in southwest France, they are always dotted thinly in long grass at the edge of woodland. They do not seem to colonise thickly, but when I gave a bucket of small corms to my mother-in-law a few years ago, she had a dense, flowering colony in three years.

Every bit of the plant is poisonous so you have to be careful planting them if there is a risk to animals and children. The leaves must be left to die down completely or the new corm will not develop properly underground. If you hate the sight of them, then *C. agrippinum* (named after that poisonous old Roman) is tidier. The leaves only reach 7-8in high and sometimes disappear as early as May. The flowers are rosy-lilac but the petals are chequered. I used to grow it through a carpet of silver *Stachys byzantina*.

Colchicums do not seem to be prone to virus problems, but slugs and woodlice sometimes take a fancy to them. Mr Bullock finds that slugs prefer the wide-necked cultivars and species such as *C. byzantinum*, whose necks they slither down to do their dirty work. Consequently, he likes to lift his corms every couple of years and clean them up before replanting. With glamorous species such as the large white *C. speciosum* 'Album' he finds it well worth the effort. He covers pots and troughs with shingle to deter pests from above. For the smaller species a light soil is helpful, but most of the common ones thrive in quite a heavy loam. The strong species are also suitable for planting in rough or meadow grass, where the leaves are less of an embarrassment in spring.



The Savill Garden is a beautiful woodland garden developed from a natural site

Open this weekend

LATE OCTOBER is a watershed for garden visiting, signalling the end of the flowery months. But visits through the many gardens for the winter months. But visits through the autumn and winter can be equally rewarding and instructive. Many places offer somewhere to walk, spectacular views and architecture within a natural landscape.

■ **The Savill Garden, Wick Lane, Englefield Green, Surrey (01753 860222)**
Off A30 into Wick Lane, 3m west of Egham and 5m from Windsor. Open: daily to end Oct. 10am-6pm, daily Nov to Feb. 10am-4pm, closed Dec 25-26. Entrance: £3.50, accompanied under-16s free

THE SAVILL GARDEN (pictured left) exemplifies one of the most important styles of 20th-century gardening: the woodland garden developed from a natural site. Autumn is a wonderful time to visit, to catch sun filtering through the changing foliage of the venerable beeches and to follow the network of paths that lead through the 35 acres, up and down the sloping ground and across the streams. Without the summer array of flower and foliage, you can appreciate the ornamental trees and shrubs added during the 1930s.

■ **Overbecks, Sharpitor, Salcombe, Devon (01548 842893)**
1.5m southwest of Salcombe via single-track roads. Open: daily all year, 10am-8pm (sunset if earlier). Entrance: £2

THERE ARE few other gardens in England where palms are the most widely planted trees. They are a testament to the remarkable microclimate that Overbecks enjoys on a terraced slope to maximise the sun. The result is a wealth of plants that overflow from the Edwardian terraced framework. From late summer into autumn half-hardy perennials, different fuchsias and one of the garden's exotic highlights, the blue-flowered Chatham Island forget-me-not, *Myosotidium hortensia*, all display. But perhaps most interesting at this time of year is the foliage and shape of the many broad-leaved or evergreen trees and shrubs from around the world that flourish in the garden.

■ **The Dorothy Clive Garden, Willoughbridge, Market Drayton, Shropshire (01630 647237)**
On A51 between Nantwich and Stone. Open: daily to end Oct. 10am-5.30pm. Entrance: £2.60, children £1

NAMED AFTER the woman who so enjoyed seeing this garden begin during the last years of her life, and created by her husband, Colonel Harry Clive, it is a place to be enjoyed at any time of the year. The former quarry now has paths winding through woodland garden, between great groups of shrubs decorated with ornamental trees, including fine acers. The scree garden is a treasure-trove of rare alpines stretching down towards a lily pool.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE

● We regret that the opening times of Hackwood Park were given incorrectly in Weekend last Saturday.

WEEKEND TIPS

- Prune back any small, first-season hedging plants of beech, hawthorn and privet by two-thirds or to about 6-9in to ensure a dense, bushy hedge in the future.
- Complete any trimming of evergreen hedges.
- Cut out fruited stems on cultivated blackberries, and tie in the new ones at even spacings. Sever any layered tips and replant elsewhere.
- Plant strawberries.
- Plant nerine bulbs, and divide old mounded clumps after flowering.
- Check ties on recently planted young trees before autumn in case they have become tight.
- Check that the greenhouse heater is working before the cold weather arrives. Put up polythene or bubble film insulation inside greenhouses in cold areas.

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GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON replies to readers' letters

Q Plants and flowers under lime trees in my garden become covered in a black sticky substance. Is there anything I can do? — L.A. Master, London WC1.

A Lime trees are subject to attack by aphids, which drip their sticky excreta ("honeydew") on to plants below, and these become black with sooty mould and the dirt and dust of cities. Lime trees are greedy and shallow rooted, and best suited to large gardens with only turf or gravel below. Where honeydew is a problem, regular spraying of the foliage beneath with a hosepipe will stop it becoming unpleasant.

Q My garden is in an area covered by a Tree Preservation Order. For legislative purposes, what constitutes a tree? It would seem prudent to avoid planting species controlled by law in case pruning, topiary or other training contravened the law. — P. Richardson, Falmouth, Cornwall.

A TPOs can apply to any species, so long as it is big enough. In Conservation Areas (not the same as a blanket TPO) a protected "tree" is one which has a diameter of 75mm or more at a height of 1.5m. Permission must be sought to work on trees over that size.

Q Our magnolia tree is carrying deformed buds, some as large as 7in. It is 35 years old, and was shaped and thinned out five years ago, and we have it retrained every two years. Our trained "forester" does not recognise the problem. — F.E. Lucas, Knebworth, Hertfordshire.

A These are seed pods and will split open to reveal the seeds. You could grow new ones. Some magnolias have large pods and *Magnolia acuminata* is known as the "cucumber tree". It is not necessary to prune magnolias, unless they are in the way. Is your "forester" that well trained?

Q My local shop is selling "wild tulip bulbs from Holland". Is it likely these have been dug up from the wild, or will they

be a cultivated wild-type tulip? — R. Giles, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

A Write to Flora and Fauna International, Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge CB1 2DT for the Good Bulb Guide (£1.50 plus p&p). This lists

stockists who have agreed not to trade in wild collected bulbs. FFI has also set up an Indigenous Propagation Project, to get Dutch villagers to produce their local bulbs commercially and sell them abroad. You can join the FFI for £12 a year, and receive the guide for free.

● Readers should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.

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A green-fingered mission impossible

BY JANE OWEN

Serge Charles took on an impossibly sized and shaped garden and won. He wanted a garden which would evoke the jungle-like look of his mother's plot in Mauritius but a few factors stood in his way. Tottenham, north London, has its good points but streets of Edwardian respectability have little in common with the second, voluptuous vegetation of an Indian Ocean island.

His garden is so tiny and awkwardly shaped — a small, overshadowed triangle at the back, a five-foot strip at the front — that most people would have given up. And the heavy clay soil made it even more of a challenge.

Yet today his house is referred to locally as "the one with the beautiful garden". From inside, Rousseau-esque leaves have obscured the view to the street beyond, giving a taste of the exotic, while people passing by outside have the pleasure of discovering an unexpected oasis.

In the same way, the tiny but elegant front garden pictured right also affords both private and public pleasure. In fact, the rules followed in each instance are similar: a mass of interest is packed into tiny spaces by making the most of colours and shapes. The alternative to this approach is to keep things perfectly simple, with only one type of plant and colour range.

In 17 years, Mr Charles has transformed the five-foot-wide cleft between the front of his house and the six-foot hedge which borders the garden into an area of startling abandon.

A great whirl of colour, leaf shape and plant types races along the ground and

up the wall of his east-facing house. The planting is so tight that there is little room to walk.

The general style is cottage garden but the plants are, on the whole, not traditional. Neatly-clipped balls of the hedging honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida* smudge beside the huge, pale-green-leaved *Datura*, the foot-long white bell-shaped flowers of which fill the street with a heavy honey scent even in late September.

demure dark-green uniform beside red-and-white ballerina flowers of fuchsias.

Hostas, ferns and the green and white striped *Miscanthus "Zebrinus"* grass, now so despised by haughty culturalists, mingle with roses and that brilliant white-stemmed bramble *Rubus cockburnianus*. Some species are planted directly into the ground while others, such as the acid-loving *Camellia*, live in pots.

Hack your way through

take. The first step is to ignore the rule book — most rules are aimed at normal spaces. Then you must make a policy decision: either to keep the design extremely simple, using only one type of plant (evergreen and grey planting such as box or lavender, for instance) or to pack in a mass of interest, as Mr Charles has done, so that there is always something new to look at. Your next objective is to get the soil right, or use pots if the garden is filled with rubble.

Another favourite trick is to pack in "eyecatchers" to draw attention to far points in the garden and away from eyesores such as unsightly neighbouring sky-lines or intrusive conifers. These can be anything interesting — from a sculpture to almost any artefact.

One of the most important aspects, often overlooked, is to make the most of any available light: use mirrors or pierce "gossip windows" into hedges to allow light through, and use pale shingle, stone or decking for the ground surface. Do not attempt grass because it never works well in small areas. Trellis, especially heavy-duty hand-made trellis (consult garden designers in the *Yellow Pages*) is an excellent way to let light in, give privacy and allow for vertical gardening. Use every dimension: beds, walls and, in very hot spaces, small pergolas for climbers.

Finally, give the impression that the garden goes on further than it really does by building doors or mirror-filled arches on boundary walls "leading through" to next door's garden.



Serge Charles: recreating Mauritius in a small, cramped London garden



The exuberant way to fill space: a picture from Thomasina Tarling's *Truly Tiny Gardens* (Conran Octopus, £10.99)

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Scoby's previous owners were reported for cruelty

The ruff guide to travelling with dogs – avoid Britain

With Britain's quarantine regulations under review **GUY WALTERS** meets a man who has travelled the world with his pets and sees how other countries cope

If they carried passports, the two miniature long-haired Dachshunds owned by David Gilmour, a 60-year-old Canadian investor would boast entry stamps from, among others, Canada, the United States, and France, where they live with their owner.

Mr Gilmour, who runs businesses, resorts and developments around the world, says that he has had no problems taking Monte and Carlo anywhere in the world apart from the UK. His horror at our quarantine laws has put him off coming here. He says: "Because of business ideas and various opportunities I wanted to buy somewhere to live in England but when I looked into the quarantine laws I was appalled. It put me off buying in Britain, and it certainly stopped me from investing – and my investments are significant."

The procedure Mr Gilmour adopts to fly Monte and Carlo from country to country is simple. Because the dogs are small, they can be taken on a plane as hand luggage, in a small container that can slip under the aircraft seat in front. Larger animals would have to be carried in the hold, which Mr Gilmour feels is risky, especially when aircraft take for hours on hot runways during delays.

Bureaucracy in most countries is minimal. In France, Mr Gilmour says that he, Monte and Carlo are just waved through. In New York and the rest of the United States, a record of inoculations is examined. In Canada the same applies. When driving through continental Europe, most officials barely check humans, let alone animals. What deterred Mr Gilmour from visiting the

UK was the fact that he would have to pay £3,000 to have his dogs incarcerated for six months. "For a dog to spend six months in quarantine is the equivalent of a human spending five years in a prison cell," he claims. Monte and Carlo both have identity numbers tattooed in their ears, they have been vaccinated against every canine disease possible, and carry documentation from the best vets in the cities where they have lived. Their owner says: "They cannot possibly have rabies

dogs), has been dewormed, and is registered with the Swedish International Traffic Veterinary Control (ITVC). If Swedes wish to take their pet to any country other than the UK, then the passport information will be enough to ensure access.

Non-Swedes wishing to bring their pet into the country must show a vaccination record, and the animal must bear an identity tag, in the form of a microchip or a tattoo. Swedish Customs then enter the number into the database, and the computer will show whether the animal can enter the country.

'Because Monte and Carlo are small they can be taken on a plane as hand luggage'

and there is no need for them to be punished by quarantine." He is happy to obey the 30-day home quarantine laws that New Zealand enforces. "It seems like a good medium. You can monitor your pet at home. It's not as though you wouldn't take it to the vet if it became ill." The system operates on a principle of trust, in which owners must ensure that the animal does not leave their property for a month.

Monte and Carlo would be welcomed in Sweden where quarantine laws have been scrapped in favour of animal "passports" that show that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies, leptospirosis, distemper (for

The Swedes make no claims that the system is not bureaucratic. Suzanne Eliasson of the ITVC says: "There are many import rules to fulfil and many questions from importers and it is true that it is easier to run a quarantine system. However, we have a well-staffed telephone helpline at the Ministry of Agriculture." A real benefit is that the system also pays for itself by the imposition of an administrative fee. This costs 400 Krone (£38.46) for up to ten animals compared with £1,500 to keep one animal in quarantine in the UK.

Mr Gilmour says that he is regularly approached by animal smugglers, who will illegally take your animal into the UK for £500 each. "With a passport system, nobody would want to do this," he says. "Who in their right mind would entrust their pet to a smuggler when they would only have to pay an administrative charge? However, with quarantine costs, such smuggling is far more likely – £1,500 is a lot of money."



Bureaucracy for pets travelling to countries apart from Britain is minimal if they have inoculation certificates

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IN THE past ten years more than 150 thousand cows have developed BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy). The vast majority of veterinary scientists and microbiologists agree that cattle developed this disease after eating cattle cake containing meat and bone meal derived from sheep with scrapie – a spongiform encephalopathy known for at least 200 years. The disease had "jumped the species barrier". Which posed the question – if it went from sheep to cattle where else could it go?
In April 1989 pet food makers stopped using offal that included potentially infective BSE material. This specified bovine offal (SBO), which is brain, spinal chord, spleen, thymus, tonsils and intestines, was banned from use in human food in November 1989. Pets were

A VET WRITES

protected before people. Before 1986, scientists and doctors recognised encephalopathies in mink and feline SE has been found in 72 cats, all born prior to 1989. No one has found encephalopathy in dogs. A few zoo animals were infected, perhaps because they were fed on infected sheep or cattle heads.

Cattle cake may have transmitted BSE to elans, oryx and kudu – relatives of our domestic ruminants. All zoo animal infections also occurred before 1989, the critical year.

Good quality dog or cat food from one of the "big name" manufacturers is the best way of feeding your pet. That's what I am doing. Do it yourself beef-free diets

are quite likely to lead to deficiencies and create extra problems.

The BSE panic has made British beef the safest in the world – whether it is prime steak or something in a carton or can for your cat or dog. The potentially suspect bits have been removed for incineration before anybody – human or pet – gets near them. Beef used in pet foods has to reach standards that would make it fit for human consumption.

My dog is having canned food and her daily bone. I am eating beef – medium rare. Not as overdone as the BSE hysteria. Perhaps the best way to restore confidence in British beef is to tell the rest of the world "if you want the best and safest beef, buy British."

JAMES ALLCOCK

Something for a country seat

Antiques: tips for happy hunting

Whatever their approach, the antique dealer is not your friend. They know exactly what everything is, and the price the market will stand when they sell it. Thus, bargains are rare.
There are, of course, exceptions. Very often a specialist dealer, in the course of buying privately, will be offered things outside their particular expertise. In this way I was able to buy a very fine piece of needlepoint from a woman who deals in English ceramics. She thought it a good piece but it was of little use to her and she was delighted to sell it to me at a profit for £50.

I recognised it as the seat of a late-18th century side chair. The large red and yellow flowers on a fawn ground were worked in wool in tent and cross-stitch. It is likely that this piece was worked by the mistress of the house and her daughters. In the 18th century, chairs were often made to fit seats, as covers took much longer to complete than a set of chairs.

All restoration is expensive, particularly textiles. Had this piece fitted an existing chair or stool, it might have been worth patching, but as it was, there was enough to make a very fine cushion. Professional textile conservators will regale you with the horrors of doing

anything yourself – canvas that disintegrates, shrinkage, the lot. The Victoria and Albert museum will offer advice, ring them for details (0171-938 8422). I had the needlework backed with calico by Cornelia Bridgwood (0181-878 4907) for £25. This prepares it for the rigours of drawing room life. I did not dare wash it so I vacuumed it through muslin with an upholstery attachment.
Modern fringes are expensive, but there is little wastage. Antique trim is more authentic but it is hard to find. I went to Marylin Garrow (0181-392 1655) where I found three yards of 19th-century fringe at £20 a yard. She also had a 18th-century green velvet for the backing (£25).

I had a pad made (£23) – pads should be an inch larger than the finished cushion so that it looks nice and full. I took everything to Diana Clement (0181-549 0137), who has great experience in making up antique cushions and who charged me £30. Total cost £123.
Restoring all thoughts of how nice it looked in our drawing room. I rang an interior decorator who bought it for £325. History does not relate how much he charged his American client.

NICHOLAS COURTNEY

THE TIMES CROSSWORDS FOR CHRISTMAS

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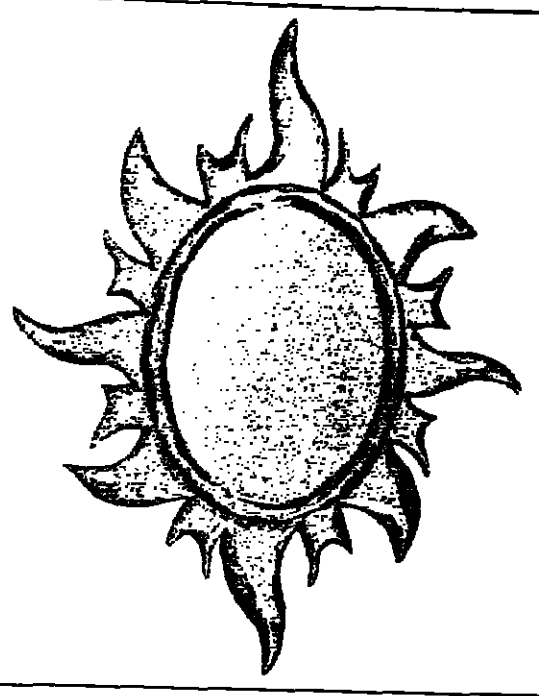
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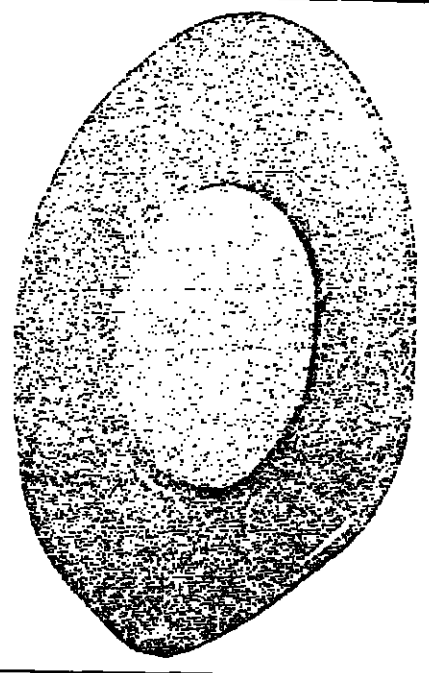
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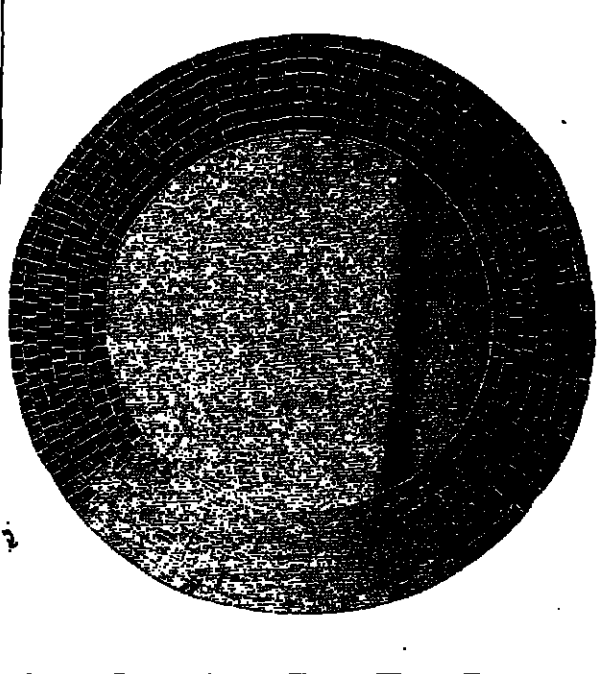
MERCURY MIRROR
Charlotte Packe's mercury mirrors are made from resin and stone dust. They range from £55 for the small mirror to £220 for the larger version. Available from the Furniture Union (0171-287 3424).

Mirrors as art? **AMANDA LOOSE** enters a looking-glass world of bold new designs and style statements

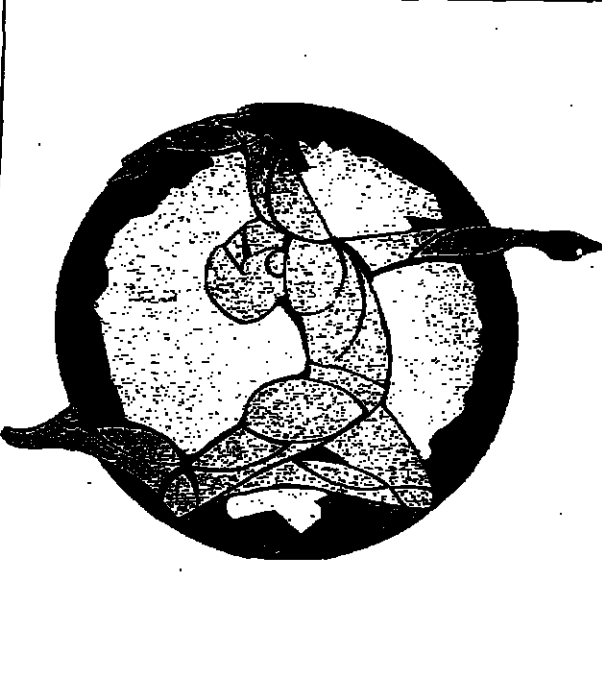


Time for reflection for Doris Nolan and Katharine Hepburn in the 1938 comedy *Holiday*. Until recently mirrors were purely functional; now they can also be works of art

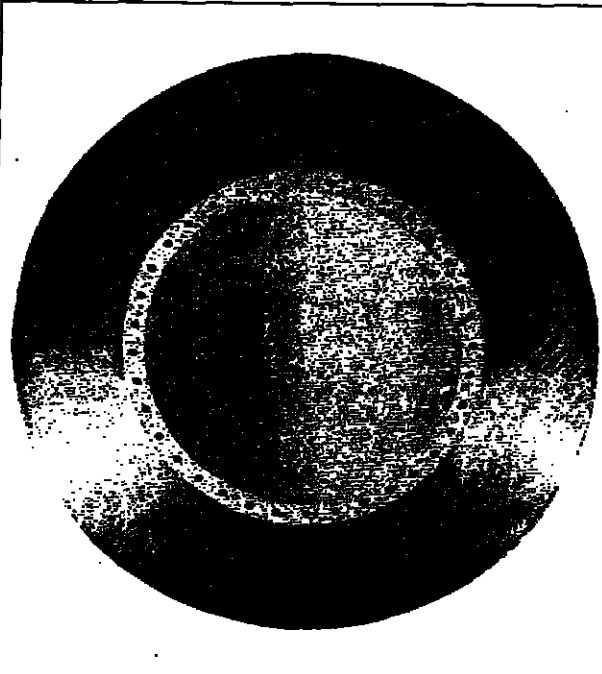
Here's looking at you



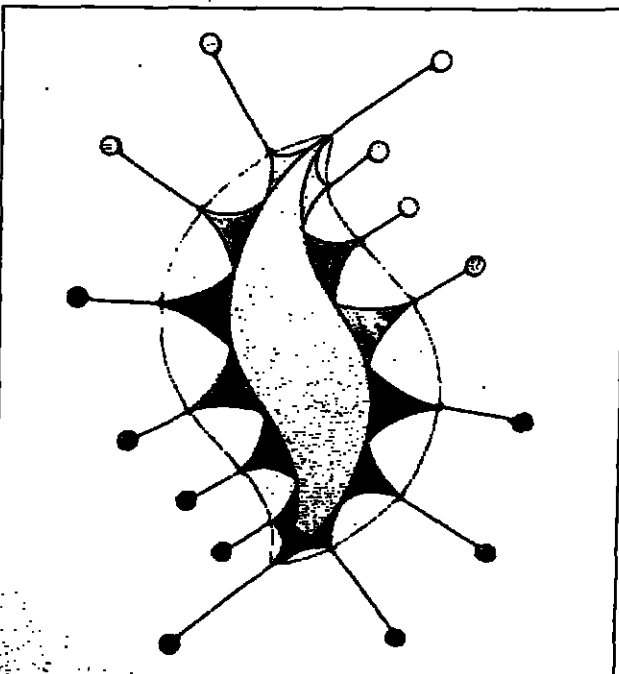
MOSAIC MIRROR
Graham & Green have opted for the classical look: a mosaic mirror with gold-painted metal squares, based on a plaster frame, for £205. (Graham & Green, 0171-727 4594).



THE SWIMMER
This mirror (£150) is available from Polly Pollard, who designs glass and acrylic mirrors in her Spitalfields shop and also works to designs provided by her customers (0171-375 3283).



GIANT SILVER DOT
This futuristic-looking mirror (£155), made from aluminium, is also available in brass for £189. Smaller versions of both mirrors are stocked at £89.95. (Heals: 0171-636 1866)



THE ATOM MIRROR
This splendidly distinctive and unusual mirror (£161) is by glass design specialist Diaphanous Glass and is available from Purves & Purves (0171-580 8223).

RUTH GLEDHILL gives thanks for all things fishy Harvest of the seas



I THOUGHT there was something fishy about an invitation to a service six months before the event. And so it turned out. The front entrance to the church in the narrow backstreet of the City of London was closed, but a faint quivering of the nostrils and I realised that we should dive around the corner, where a shoal of pretty girl choristers in deep ocean blue told us where to weigh anchor. This was the City's annual fish harvest festival, still going strong despite the migration of the Billingsgate fish market downstream to near Canary Wharf. An array of fish made eyes at us from the aromatic display in the porch of St Mary at Hill, the church of the Watermen and Lightermen company. The fish has been a symbol of Christianity since Jesus urged his disciples to leave their boats and become fishers of men. It became an early symbol of Christ because the letters of the Greek word for fish, *ichthys*, are an acronym of the Greek words for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour. In the early, persecuted church, a fish symbol on doorways would indicate to insiders a place of Christian worship. It quickly became linked especially to the Latin church, where for centuries it has been a tradition to eat fish on Fridays. British governments have at various times sought to create other fish days besides Fridays, as a ploy to help the fishing industry. Today, anyone stuck behind a car with a fish symbol on the bumper knows that the driver in front is an evangelical. "We praise Thee, Lord,

Who bid'st us reap, The harvest of the sea," we sang, in one of two hymns-written especially for the fish market, fishermen and fishmongers. "Just as the sea at Thy command, Yields up to us its shoals, So we must bring, O Lord, to Thee, The harvest of our souls." Our reading, from Genesis, celebrated the creation of heaven, the earth and the seas in between. There was a prayer written for Billingsgate market: "Come among these thy servants who toil beside our river day by day to provide food for their fellow men". There was a prayer for seafarers, lighthouse keepers, port pilots, fishing fleets and dock and harbour workers, as well as a harvest thanksgiving. Our sermon was preached by one of the church's "flying bishops" appointed to look after traditionalists opposed to women priests, and whom I shall forever think of now as the "flying fish bishop". The Right Rev Edwin Barnes, Bishop of Richborough, described how he grew up in a fishing port, Plymouth, and how his last "honest job" before beginning his ascent of the ecclesiastical hierarchy was as vicar of Hessele, Hull. He referred to those thrown out of work in the fishing industry has experienced, to the limits on catches imposed by European policy. "We thank God for the harvest. But we should above all ask for wisdom to weigh the present against future profit," he said. The fish in the porch were to be donated to the Salvation Army old people's homes. As we left, I turned to look at one particularly round and succulent specimen, and could have sworn the old trout winked.

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● St Mary at Hill Church, St Mary at Hill, London EC3 8EE (0171-626 4184).

'Suddenly you're back at school'

Whether one's schooldays were pure hell, or (as many an Etonian has discovered to his cost) such perfect bliss that nothing in later life can ever match the experience, the great thing about them is that they are over. Or so we think, until parenthood brings us nose-to-nose with the experience for the second time. The first of many rude educational shocks to strike in our house came when my son was a couple of years old. Congratulating myself on my superhuman efficiency, I started to ring around the local schools with a view to putting his name down for the impossibly distant day when he might be old enough to learn something. How old did you say he is? said several school secretaries, with barely-concealed derision. Oh no, dear, I'm afraid our lists for his age group have been closed for quite some time now. An event that had been a vague dot on the horizon swiftly turned into an overwhelming obsession. Should I move house? Convert to Roman Catholicism? And what advice does one give a three-year-old who is about to be assessed for a place at nursery school by a formidably cosseted person in twinset and pearls? Parents, I rapidly discovered, were firmly shown the door at these interviews, so I took to giving my son the third degree in the car on the way home. "Did you tell her about your reading? And how you can count up to ten? What did she ask you?" "Nothing interesting," said Alexander repressively, showing signs,

PERSONAL LIFE BY JANE SHILLING



Schooldays: hell first and second time around

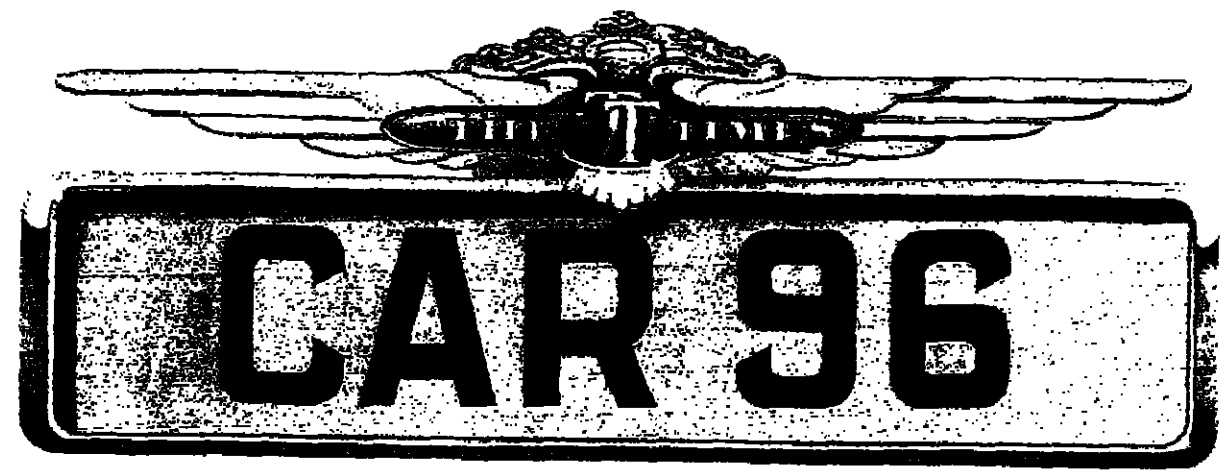
of days into the term, to find out how everyone else's first day had gone. "Did he cry? And what about you?" "Oh, absolute floods as soon as I got back to the car ...", I found myself having the same curious conversation with everyone I know. Describing Alexander's mortifying (although temporary, I trust) habit of beginning each new day at school in a state of complete emotional collapse, I would pause for some answering vignette, only to hear, in tones where pity was irritatingly mingled with self-satisfaction, that Flavia and Johnny and Charlie and Jake loved school. "Simply can't wait to get there in the mornings," confided one mother, formerly the most languid of us all: "I find him standing by the front door with his little satchel in his hand, saying 'I'm going to learn something new today, Mummy'. Well, of course, he was just ready for a new challenge. I do think it's awful the way the ones who find it more of a struggle get labelled cry-babies ...". Reeling a bit from this sucker-punch, I was wholly

unprepared for the follow-up: "And how's Alexander's reading coming along?" "Reading?" said I (prevented by force of habit from boasting that that very evening my offspring had read in a clear and intelligible voice several sentences from *The Tale of Samuel Whiskers*, and at the same time had volunteered, unprompted by me, the information that the French for rat was *rat*). "I don't think they do much reading yet. As far as I can tell he spends most of his time sitting under the desk with his hands over his eyes."

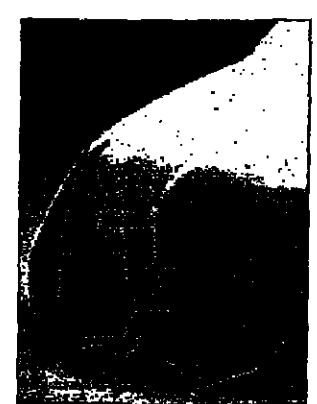
My friend replied in tones of deepest concern. "Oh no! But that's awful. I know how keen you were to send him to a state school, but perhaps you ought to start thinking about remedial teaching. I mean, Flavia's already reading aloud from Beatrix Potter — and you know how difficult she is. All that stuff about goffering. And she's showing an interest in French. We're a bit worried that she might be seriously gifted. Such a responsibility, having an outstandingly intelligent child. They get so easily bored, you know ...". With difficulty, I prevented myself from replying that, although Alexander might be a halfwit, it was a great comfort to know that at least he was unlikely to find himself much troubled by ennui. But the awful truth was plain to see: just when you think you're properly grown-up, you find yourself back in the playground, with all its attendant terrors and humiliations undiminished by the passage of time.



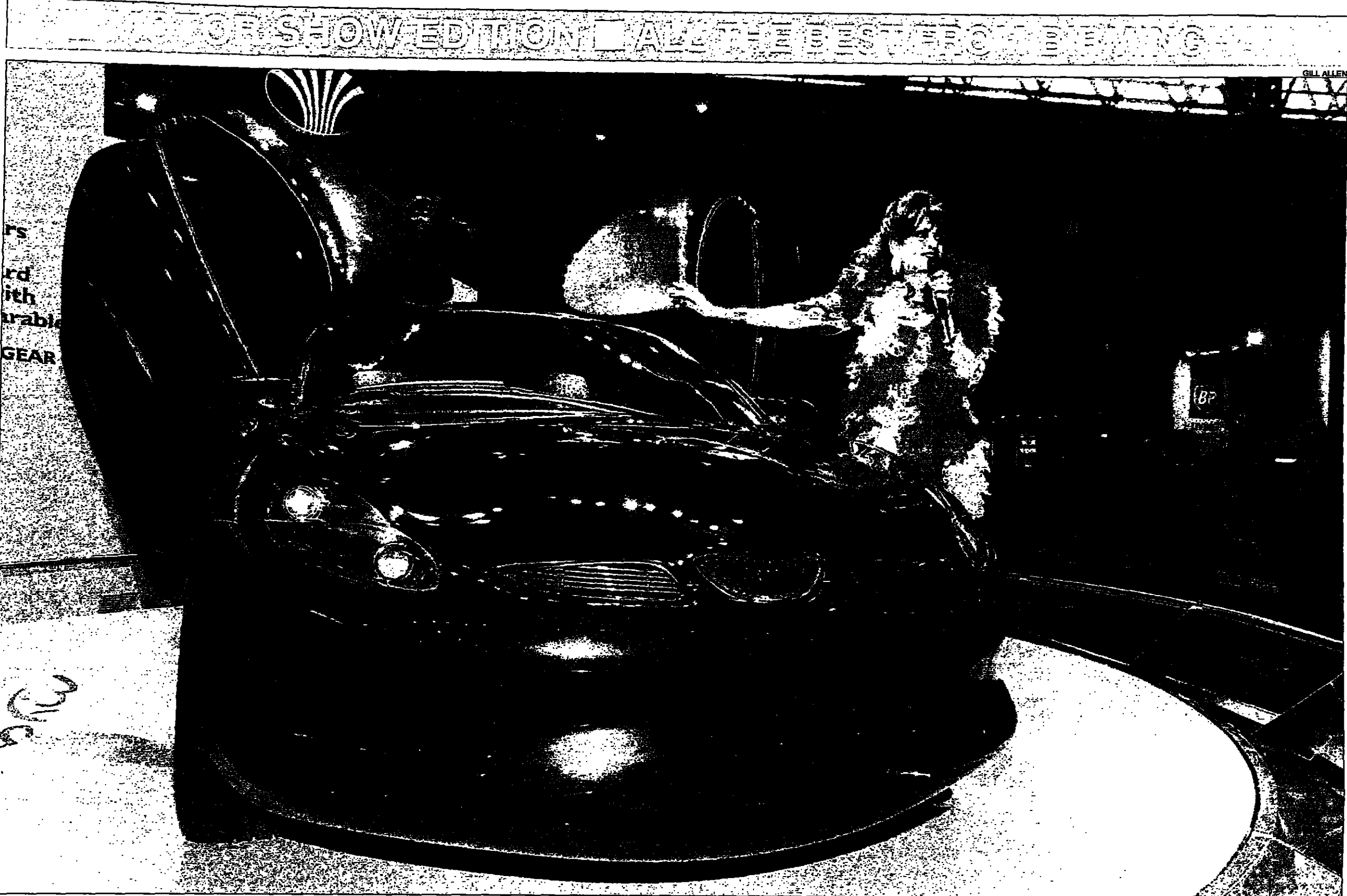
The real cost of motoring past and present
Page 2



Lifting the veil on a car of the future
Page 10



SATURDAY OCTOBER 19 1996



Margarita Pracatan introduces Daewoo's gull-wing Mya concept car, the best at the motor show this year. It's exciting, innovative and packed with the latest technology, and the design skills that lay behind it are all uniquely British

The future: from Worthing, via Korea

Exciting, innovative, and loaded with new technology: the best concept car at the motor show this week might have a foreign badge—but the brains behind it are all British, writes Vaughan Freeman.

The gull-wing Mya 2+2 sportster is a car of the future from Daewoo, the controversial South Korean manufacturer best known for its bargain-basement sales in this country.

But the Mya was conceived and born not on the other side of the globe in Seoul, but amid the cosy and very English setting of Worthing in West Sussex, where tea and retirement are usually higher on the agenda than cutting-edge automotive design.

For the West Sussex coast town is where Daewoo has its Technical Centre, its European design headquarters where 900 designers and engineering staff, connected via a warehouse-sized room of computers, keeps in touch with the global Daewoo empire.

Their brief is to ensure Daewoo stays not only in touch, but one step ahead of the latest styling trends

sweeping the important British and European markets. So committed is Daewoo to its British team that it is spending £30 million to expand the plant.

What is it about the British psyche that makes them into such sought-after designers? Jim Mason, managing director of the centre, says: "As part of Daewoo's global strategy, the company needs experience in Western automotive design and engineering, which is why the company bought this centre, which was then owned by International Automotive Design."

"Daewoo cannot attack world markets from a domestic Korean base, which is why we are their main design centre outside South Korea. I think the British have an open-minded approach. One of the things about British designers is that they are very flexible and creative, and have an ability to consider different ways of doing things."

"They are also very enthusiastic about the product from a practical point of view. The Brits like to get their hands on the bits and pieces

instead of sitting in a sterile office in front of their computer design workstations."

Prime example of that design flexibility is senior designer, Brian Osborn, who came up with the flowing, fluid exterior of the Mya. A graduate of Coventry Polytechnic, he joined the Worthing Centre when it was still IAD. In his time he has worked on everything from the design of aircraft seats to motorcycles in India, crash helmets, hand-held computers, London buses, Zanussi washing machines, as well as cars and trucks.

Osborn says: "It is not just in automotive design. You will see British dominance too in things like graphic design. One factor might be that in Britain it is OK to be a non-conformist."

Cindy Chanwick designed the Mya interior, and Ginger Ostle, Daewoo's chief designer, believes British encouragement of the individual, as opposed to the attitude in Japan and other Asian countries where nails that stand proud have to be banged flat to the wall, contributes to that inventiveness.

Ostle, who worked for Triumph

cars in Britain, before moving to Germany to work for Porsche, then for Mazda before he joined Daewoo, agrees that Britain leads in car design, but that this ingenuity is only matched by the peculiarly British failure to recognise the skills and abilities of its home-grown designers.

He says: "That was one of the reasons why I left this country and worked for Porsche for 16 years". Ostle, who commutes regularly back and forth from Worthing to his German home, says: "Travel 20 miles across the Channel and designers from Britain can double their money elsewhere in Europe. Something that continually surprises me, despite it being a smaller and smaller world, is that the understanding of different cultures is still surprisingly naive and lacking elsewhere, especially in Asian companies."

Asian and Japanese firms, he says, concentrate primarily on the demands of their domestic customers, so that their cars for Europe and America suffer. That is not the

case in Europe generally, and in Britain in particular. "Until recently the UK was the best place to learn automotive skills," Ostle adds. Schools such as London's Royal College of Art led the field though things are changing. "Until the rest of the world discovered those British institutions and started sending their people to them, the British took advantage, and then went abroad to use the skills they had been taught."

"The British it seems are encouraged to be creative, to be individuals. It is a stimulating culture here, a very stimulating environment, as opposed perhaps to Asian cultures where the group culture prevails, or California where the stereotypes are stifling."

The lack of recognition clearly rankles though. He says: "We can justifiably pat ourselves on the back and say: 'Aren't we brilliant?' But if it would be great if that brilliance was exploited in the country of origin, and it was not left to foreigners to exploit it."

The Worthing team hopes the Mya will win at least some of the recognition they feel is their due.



The Mya makes up in innovation and content what it lacks in name-appeal (a Mya apparently is a South American clam shell and the car, like the shell, is supposed to cocoon the occupants). The doors sweep up and out, fitting snugly into deep scoops in the roof, allowing front and rear passengers easy access.

The interior is arresting. Among the goodies for rear-seat passengers is a pop-up video games unit. Powered by a 2-litre, 16-valve 130bhp engine, the Mya is vastly different from most prototype concept cars in that it does work, since it is based around the fully working running gear from forthcoming Daewoo cars.

Will it make it into production? Ginger Ostle, chief designer, says: "I think there are features in the Mya that are positive, and recognition from the public at the motor show would help. If reaction to the Mya is favourable, it would be stupid to ignore it."

Forget when it was built. Consider who built it.



Mercedes-Benz
Used Cars

For more information, call 0800 010107

The industry's annual beano is not for the public, neither does it have much to do with the real world, although it does keep the hacks fed and watered

And after all that, it's just for show

I was given a pretty clear indication that cars designed with more sympathy for women drivers face an uphill struggle in a man's world when I switched on the BBC television news the other night to hear this introduction for an item about the new, smaller Land Rover: "Stand by for son of Land Rover."

Son of Land Rover? Designed for women? A daughter would be more sensible in the circumstances, but of course the shrunken Land Rover will not just be aimed at women. It is not even designed as a vehicle the public is crying out for. It is really designed so that Land Rover has something to announce at the Motor Show.

As we have seen this week, the Motor Show as a concept is very odd indeed. I am all for these events, as they enable journalists

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

to prove that there really is such a thing as a free lunch. And of course we get to sit in fancy cars without having to fork out fanciful amounts of money.

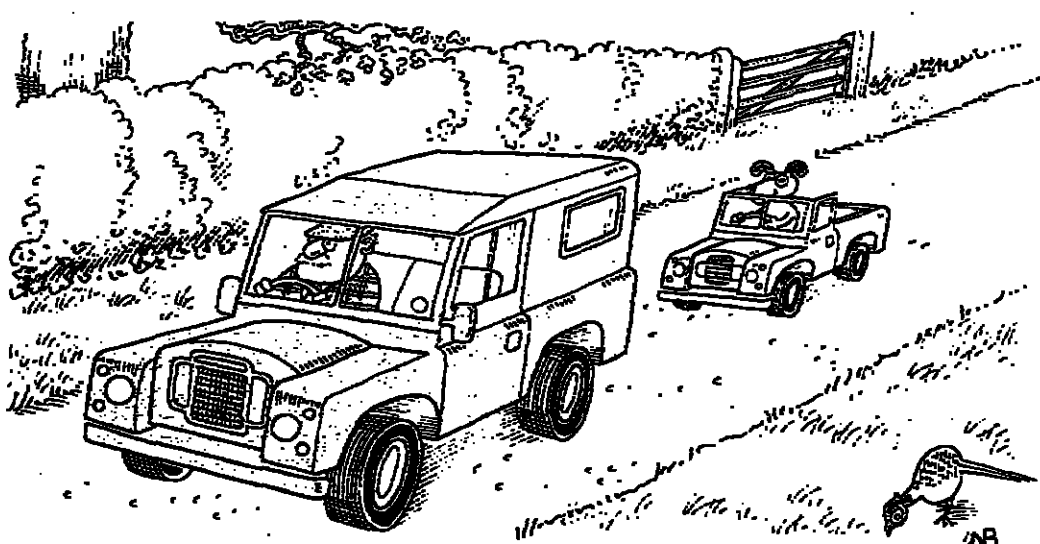
But the curiosity of this or any other motor show is that it attracts huge numbers of ordinary people

without actually being designed for ordinary people. The public, if the truth be told, are somewhat of a nuisance, for they tend to get in the way of the television cameras.

They also have a habit of treading on the feet of eager fleet buyers, the people motor shows are really all about. At the end of the show there is always an announcement about orders placed, running to mind-boggling millions of pounds. If the sums add up at all, they add up to an awful lot of wooing of fleet buyers.

The noticeable thing this year, at least as far as the media coverage is concerned, is the widespread use of the words "small" and "smaller". Not only is there the smaller Land Rover, there is also the small Ford Ka (a daft name) and the little battery-powered Peugeot.

I can just about see the case for



smaller cars: they are economical and handy for parking around town, though the latter half of that argument is not exactly overwhelming. Nearly all in-town parking areas these days are divided into bays, either on the street or in a multi-storey, so that the actual size of the car is largely irrelevant.

The Peugeot is intriguing, though, for it appeals to the right-on types who have convinced themselves that cars would be perfectly all right if only they did less harm to the environment. They like the sound of a car that makes no noise.

Unfortunately, battery technology, though fast improving, has

not yet reached the point where it is the answer to all our prayers. Not the least of the problems lies in a piece of information that scientists came up with a year or two back.

The essence of what they found was that if one was to convert all the cars in London to run on batteries, a factory would need to

be built outside the capital which made the batteries. And in making the batteries, the factory would pour out as much pollution as would all the cars in London if they still ran on petrol and diesel.

And most battery-driven cars, including the Peugeot, run for about 40 miles before they need recharging. This is good news for the people who sell us electricity, who will be able to use even more power station capacity and pump out even more pollution. What we really need is power stations that run on batteries, except that ... you see what I mean.

All of which suggests that we are some distance from becoming a nation of electric-car drivers. Even if that day arrives, there will be a great panic about pedestrians being mown down in their thousands because they could not hear us coming. At which point all the cars will have to be fitted with a machine that plays the noise of an engine.

The Birmingham Motor Show is a splendid institution and long may it flourish. But let us not deceive ourselves: as far as the ordinary driver is concerned, the show has similar qualities to synchronised swimming. It is entertaining, but meaningless.

Is the Ford now more affordable?

Remember the good old days when you could buy a family car and still have enough change from a tanner to buy some lard? Stuart Birch looks at the real costs

The words roll off the tongues of a myriad motor industry executives and salespeople, especially around motor show time. We are told that a car is "value for money", that it is "a bargain, a snip, a steal".

Sometimes, that much-abused word "affordable" sounds like a bad joke. But despite price tags that may look daunting, a comparison with average earnings suggests that many new family cars today offer fine value.

We have all heard parents and grandparents saying, "I remember when you could buy a new Ford for a hundred pounds." But rarely do they mention how much they earned at the time. In 1936, Ford, concerned that sales of its 8HP Model Y were slipping, boosted them dramatically by offering the car at exactly £100.

According to the Office for National Statistics, average weekly earnings for 1936 were £3.90 per week — £202.80 a year. A typical car worker was paid even less: *The Economist* records a figure of £180 a year for 1938, although a senior civil servant (Assistant Secretary Grade 5) would have received £1,300. So even a lowly Ford 8 with no heater, a top speed of 59mph, three-speed gearbox, rod-operated brakes and suspension like a bouncy castle still represented half a year's pay for most people.

My father bought a used Model Y; he called it "the rattletap". There was no radio but entertainment was never in short supply: the six-volt electric would often fail to start the 933cc engine in cold weather so he would be out there whirling the starting handle. Deep puddles were best avoided, as water often spurted in through the hole in the floor for the handbrake.

From its curly bumpered stem to its rubbery stern the spare wheel was mounted at the rear; there was no boot) the Ford 8 was just basic transport.

After World War II, a new Ford Anglia (Britain's cheapest car) could have been

WHAT THEY COST YOU			
	Price £	Average annual salary £	
1936 Model Y	100	202.80	
1946 Anglia	293.36	948.40	
1956 Popular	413.85	986.00	
1966 Anglia 105E DL	589	989.20	
1976 Fiesta 950L	2,079	2,854.80	
1986 Fiesta 1.3L	5,858	9,854.00	
1996 Fiesta 1.25L LX	9,185	18,288.40	

Fiesta prices from £7,845 for Encore with older 1.3 engine. The *Economist* estimates that the purchasing power of a factory worker's earnings in 1996 (£18,288) provided 940 per cent of the purchasing power of 1936, taking that year as 100 per cent.

Source: Office for National Statistics, *The Economist*, Ford Motor Co.

bought for £293.36 in 1946. It had the same 933cc 23.4bhp engine as the 8, but managed 60 mph. Standard equipment included: sun visor (one), felt floor mats, cloth upholstery; indicators were an option. Average pay had risen to £6.70 a week — £348.40 a year — so the Anglia was seriously expensive.

A decade on and Ford's range began with the Popular at £413.85, the engine was 1172cc and power a heady 30bhp. Top speed was 60.3 mph and 0-50 took 24 seconds. mpg was typically in the mid-30s. This was still basically a prewar design complete with single-blade vacuum-operated windscreen wiper which all but stopped when the car accelerated hard. Options included — joy of joys — a heater, direction indicators and some advanced technology: a windscreen washer.

By then, an average wage earner had £11.50 a week rolling in — £598 a year before tax. The price of the car was still well over two-thirds of the average wage.

The next ten years saw significant changes. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan said Britain had never had it so good, and cars started to become far more civilised, quicker and more interesting. The 1966 Anglia 105E de Luxe, with its high-revving 997cc 39bhp engine could reach 73.5 mph and scorch to 60 mph in 15.6 seconds. The gearbox was "four-speed close-ratio". The Anglia had manual plunger screenwashers, self-cancelling flasher indicators, two sun

visors, two-colour PVC upholstery, ashtrays and exterior mirror. Options included a radio and seatbelts. Price: £566, average wage in 1966, £17.10 a week, £889.20 a year. Things were looking better.

Then in 1976 came the big step in the small-car league: the front-wheel-drive Fiesta. Even the basic "L" model was good for 82 mph. Standard equipment included front disc brakes, radial tyres, folding rear seats, two-speed wipers, heated rear window and seatbelts. Price: £2,079, average national wage had jumped to £54.90 a week, £2,854.80 a year. The car again cost just over two-thirds of a year's income.

Ten years on, though, as inflation stoked up, the price of a Fiesta 1.3L had soared to £5,859, but it did have a five-speed gearbox and top speed of 101 mph. Servo brakes had become standard, as had reversing lights, halogen headlamps, electric screen-washer, electronic ignition, and push-button radio. Average wage by then had soared to £189.50 a week, £9,854 a year, making the car look good value.

And so to the current Fiesta. Fitted with the excellent 1.25-litre Zetec-SE engine, it is good for 106mph and gets to 60 in 11.9 seconds, says Ford. At 75mph it will do 41.5 mpg. Standard equipment of the LX version includes: driver's airbag, seatbelt grabbers, rear seatbelts, engine immobiliser, four-speaker radio-cassette player, driver's seat-tilt adjustment and sunroof.

Price: £9,185 — but the Fiesta can be had from £7,845 with the older 1.3 engine. Average weekly wage before tax is now £351.70; £18,288.40 a year. But new to the equation is the chirpy little Ka at £7,350 in standard form, £8,195 with such goodies as power steering with faster tyres, radio and CD player.

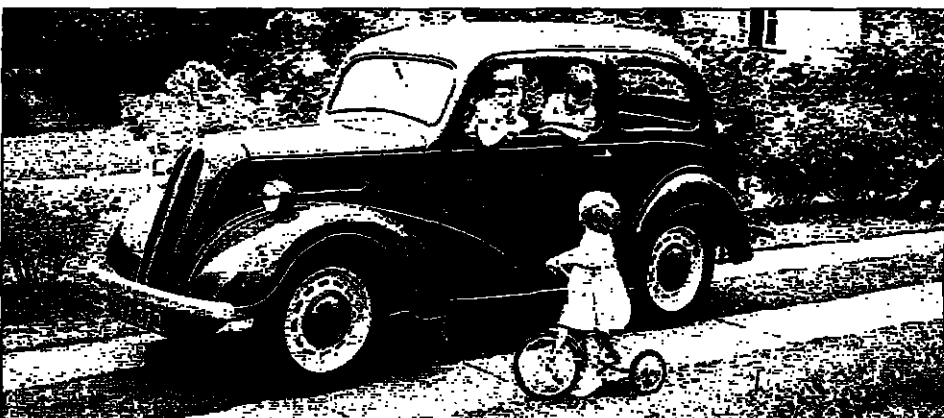
What emerges is that the price of the Model Y of 1936 represented about half the annual average wage, and today's Fiesta LX does much the same.

But in terms of safety, comfort, performance, economy and value for money on a cost-to-national-average earnings ratio, the Fiesta is out of sight of the crude Y model.

As the golden oldies are fond of saying: "Cars aren't what they used to be." Thank goodness.



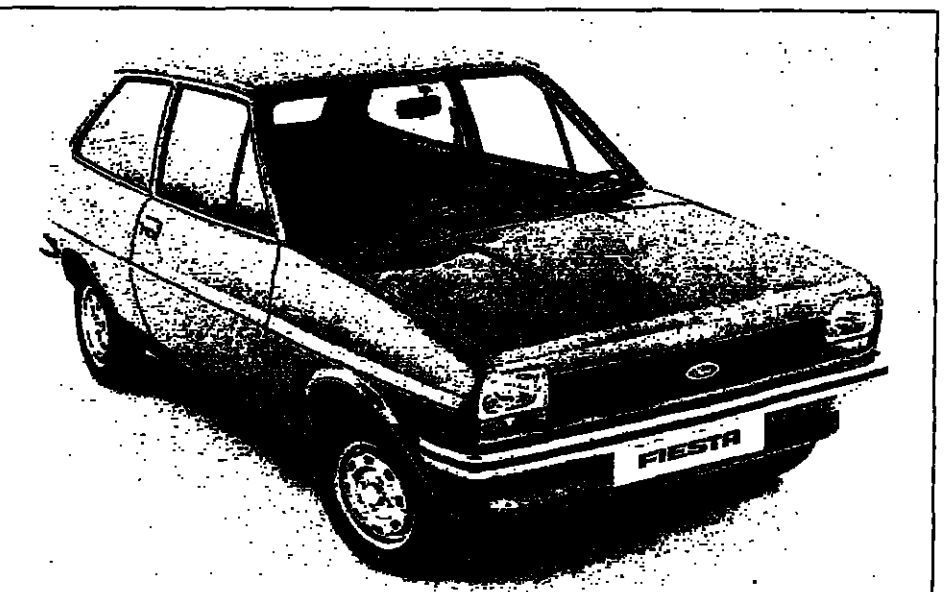
Ford boosted sales of its 8hp Model Y dramatically in 1936 by selling the car for £100



The company's Fifties Popular was still basically a prewar design with added extras



The 1966 Anglia 105E de Luxe could scorch — by the standards of the day — to 60mph



The big step in the small-car league came in 1976 with the front-wheel-drive Fiesta

Rolls-Royce price changes over the years

Being rich now costs less

■ AND NOW FOR the really good news. At the top end of the market the real price of a car has diminished quite significantly. Out of sheer curiosity, we asked Rolls-Royce how their prices had fared since 1936. This was their reply.

A 1936 Rolls-Royce Phantom III had a chassis price of £1,850. Typically, there would be an extra £700-£800 for the body or coachwork, adding up to a total cost of around £2,600. That would have been 12.82 years' toil for the average worker.

A 1936 Rolls-Royce 20/30 had a chassis price of £1,100 and the body/coachwork

would have cost £500-£600. The total cost would have amounted to about £1,650 — 8.14 years' work.

Coming right up to date, a 1996 Rolls-Royce Park Ward Limousine is £210,853, a hefty 11.53 years' work at average current pay rates. But a 1996 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawn is £118,557, representing a trifling 6.48 years' work at current rates.

So, on the basis of these silly sums, the time needed to earn enough to buy a Rolls-Royce is diminishing: in theory, at least, one day far in the future, we might all be able to afford one ...

Liquid assets that measure up to petrol

Robert Richardson on the cost of fuel compared to other fluids

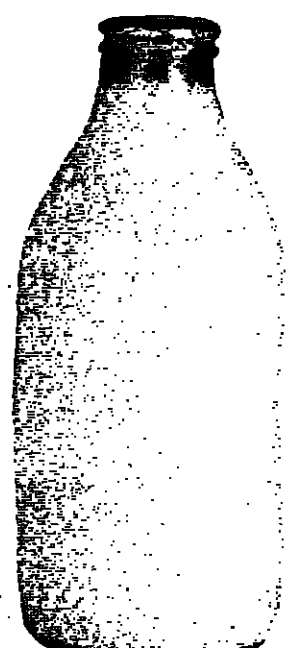
Many years ago, I once became extremely annoyed at the prospect of paying the equivalent of 25p for a gallon of petrol. Muttering imprecations against all things Italian, I hastily drove back across the border into Switzerland ... where it cost an acceptable 22p or so.

Poor, naive fool. This month *The Times* reported that in some parts of Britain petrol now costs £3 a gallon. But the thought occurs that other things come in liquid form — and how much do they cost? With the aid of some higher mathematics to convert from metric, the results are interesting: prices are randomly selected from a supermarket shelf, national averages supplied by Sainsbury or from other named sources.

Coca-Cola at 59.5p a litre works out to £2.70 a gallon — and milk is only marginally more expensive if you pay the National Dairy Council's average UK price of 38p a pint, £3.04 a gallon. Pausing only to sample Sainsbury's own-brand ice cream (vanilla flavour) at 34.5p a litre, or £1.56 for a gallon scoop, we move onwards — and definitely upwards.

If Renault's Nicole wants to use Perrier water (retail price 72p for 75ml, which means 1.04 a litre), she will have to pay £4.72 for a gallon. Papa, who's always struck me as the G&T type, may prefer to add tonic water to his tank, which at 85p a litre will cost him £3.86.

A good virgin olive oil (£6.99 a litre) will set you back £31.77 for a gallon: Del Monte orange juice and Ribena cost the same as tonic water; and, at £2.99 a litre, one of those hair shampoos with added condi-



Milk costs the same, but is no good for the engine

tioner means parting with £13.59.

Fairy Liquid — £1.39 a litre — will clean you out of £6.32, but look at all those sparkling dishes.

The latest figures from the Brewer's Society put the average price of a pint of bitter at £1.48 and lager at £1.67; thus £6.72 a gallon or £7.59 for those of the head-bashing fraternity.

Vaguely drinkable plonk may be picked up for a few quid, but let's order champagne — and something rather better — than whatever Damon Hill was spraying all over the place this week. Krug Clos du Mesnil, I think ... and the 1985. Fortnum & Mason will provide that at £165 for a 75cl bottle, which is £220 a litre and thus £1,000 a gallon. Pippin. Meanwhile, the Scotch Whisky Association in Edinburgh says a decent standard blend retails at £10.70 per 70cl, which is £15.28 a litre, thus £69.40 a gallon. However, they also turned up a 50-year-old Glenfiddich — at £6,250 a bottle, which means £8,928 a litre. After paying £40,586 for a gallon, you would need a drink.

But instead of an arm and a leg, how about blood? The National Blood Service sells its product for about £45 for 450ml; a neat £100 a litre, coming to £454 per gallon — after which you would definitely need a cup of tea and a biscuit to recover.

But all these pale into apologetic insignificance when we reach the perfume counter at Harrods, where, exclusive to that store, we can buy Amouage at £2,500 for 10ml. That's not a misprint, and it means £250,000 a litre — £1.13 million a gallon.

One should add that it does not come in a plastic bottle, but in a silver case coated in 24-carat gold with a semi-precious stone inset — but that would rattle around in the petrol tank.

And don't forget that, whatever you pay for your gallon of leaded petrol, 177.84p plus 17.5 per cent VAT costs those nice people at the Treasury.



Today's Fiesta LX costs as much as its Model Y ancestor

MOTOR SHOW

Where British beef still sells best

They crouch on the smaller stands, frequently in lurid metallic shades of purple or blue, often adorned by bosomy models in deliberate defiance of political correctness. But these are the real British success stories of the show, writes Alan Capps.

The new Jaguar XK8 has automatic transmission as standard, the Ferrari 550 Maranello boasts traction control and the Mercedes SLK is one of the most refined cars on show. But a small band of British makers now specialise in supplying no-compromise sports cars worldwide and for most, business is booming.

TVR took three orders for its new supercar, codenamed project 12/7, within hours of unveiling it, even though its 7-litre V12 engine is yet to run. A development of the company's successful V8, the new unit in unrestricted form will produce an astonishing 660 bhp.

The car is intended for racing but is designed to be driven to the track. Its interior, dominated by the roll cage essential for a racing car, is spartan and noise levels will be high. Its aggressive styling is dictated by the need for

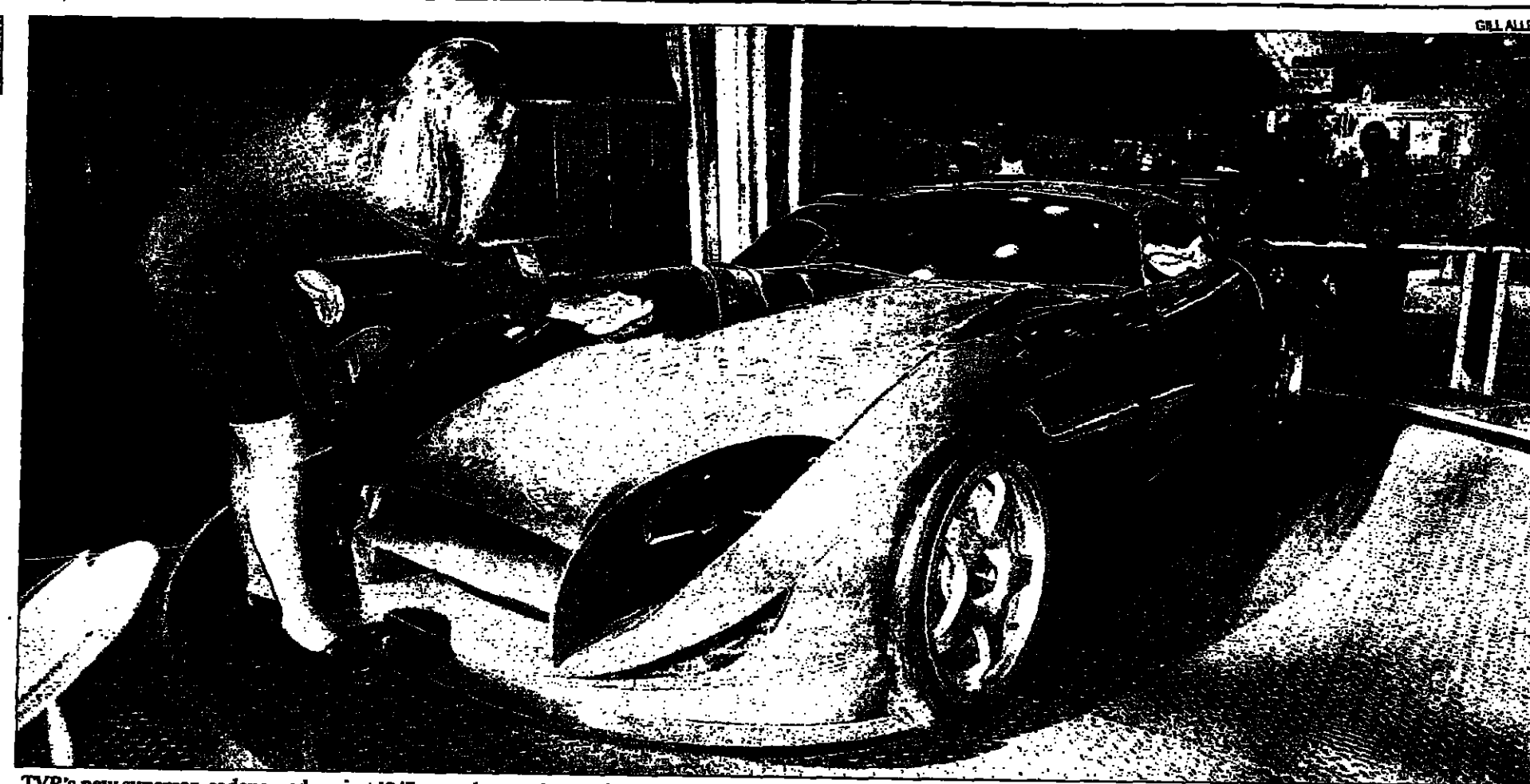
OPENINGS
The Motor Show is at the NEC, Birmingham until next Sunday. Adults £9, children and pensioners £5, car parking £5. Box office: 0121-780 4133.

downforce and a powerful airflow at high speeds. It is the company's first car to feature Formula One-style carbon disc brakes and is expected to cost well over £100,000.

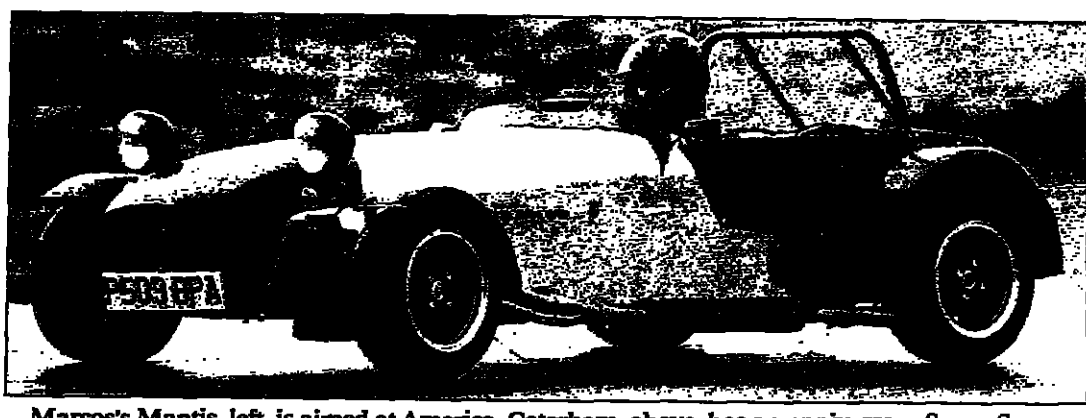
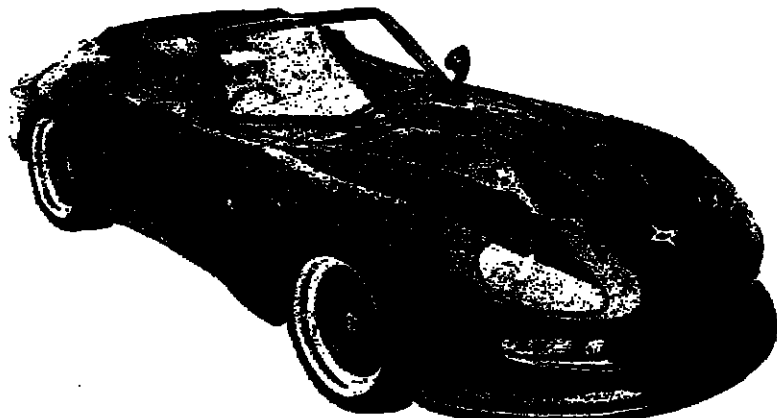
TVR is committed to running a two-car team in the BPR Global GT race series next year and may take it to the Le Mans 24-hour race.

In the past two years TVR has doubled its workforce in Blackpool from 270 to 540. This year, it expects to make 1700 cars in Britain and probably 500 in Malaysia, an astonishing record for a company once associated with kit cars. Its own engine range is extended even further with a new six-cylinder unit being added to the Griffith range.

Another success story is the Caterham company who took over the manufacturing rights



TVR's new supercar, codenamed project 12/7, won three orders within hours of being unveiled, even though its 7-litre V12 engine is yet to run. It's designed for road and race



Marcos's Mantis, left, is aimed at America. Caterham, above, has an anniversary Super Seven

to the original Lotus 7 in 1973. They are showing two new cars, the Anniversary, a special edition to mark the 40th year since the Lotus Super Seven made its debut at the London Motor Show and the Superlight, designed to drive

like a racer but be road legal. Powered by a 1.6-litre Rover K-series engine it will go from 0-60mph in 4.7 seconds (that's faster than a new Lotus Elise) and costs £17,495.

Graham Nearn, managing director of Caterham, said this

year the company is expecting to complete 650 cars against a predicted 580, half of them for export, with Japan the largest market. Another ten jobs are likely to be created at its Darford, Kent, factory where it already employs 60 people.

and in addition the company will be opening next month a new showroom in Caterham, Surrey.

The Marcos company, based in Westbury, Wiltshire, and once famous as the maker of a car with a plywood

chassis, also launched its new model, the Mantis, developed from the LM500 which won its class at Le Mans. Powered by a 4.9-litre V8 Shelby Ford engine, the car should help the company break into the American market. Jeremy Kearns,

sales manager, said five orders had been placed the day the car was unveiled.

The company's production this year will total between 80 and 100 cars but over the next three or four years, capacity will be increased to 300.

SHOW SHORTS

Stars sell cars

STARS COME at a price, writes Kevin Eason. Volvo wanted Val Kilmer to publicise their new coupe in his new film as the Saint by appearing on the motor show stand on press day. Rumours say the Swedes choked when Kilmer demanded \$1 million for the day's work.

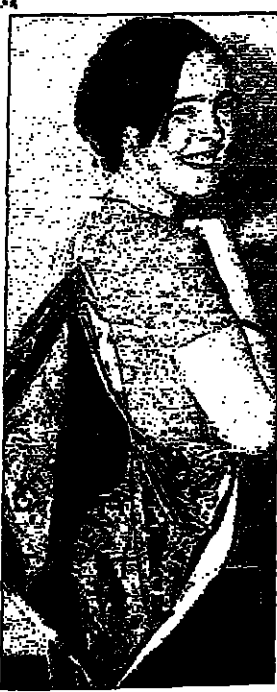
Stars abounded nevertheless, expensively paid to attract attention, often to some less than starchy cars: Noel Edmunds for Land Rover, Jeremy Clarkson for TVR and Bob Monkhouse,

who appeared for Daihatsu but disclosed he was buying a new Jaguar XK8, while Seat had one of those Wonderbra girls, whose name nobody can remember — but who needs to?

Des Lynnam was there, but I can't remember why, and Margarita Pracatan, a formidable Latin lady, was on the Daewoo stand, being paid pots of money because she sings out of tune. Can't understand that one: I sing badly out of tune and I would have done the job for half the price.



MITSUBISHI caused furrowed brows by announcing it had brought the world's smallest aircraft carrier to Britain. It turned out to be a Shogun 4x4 converted to carry a small French aerobatic plane. Unbelievably, the aircraft takes off from the roof. What will they think of next... and why?



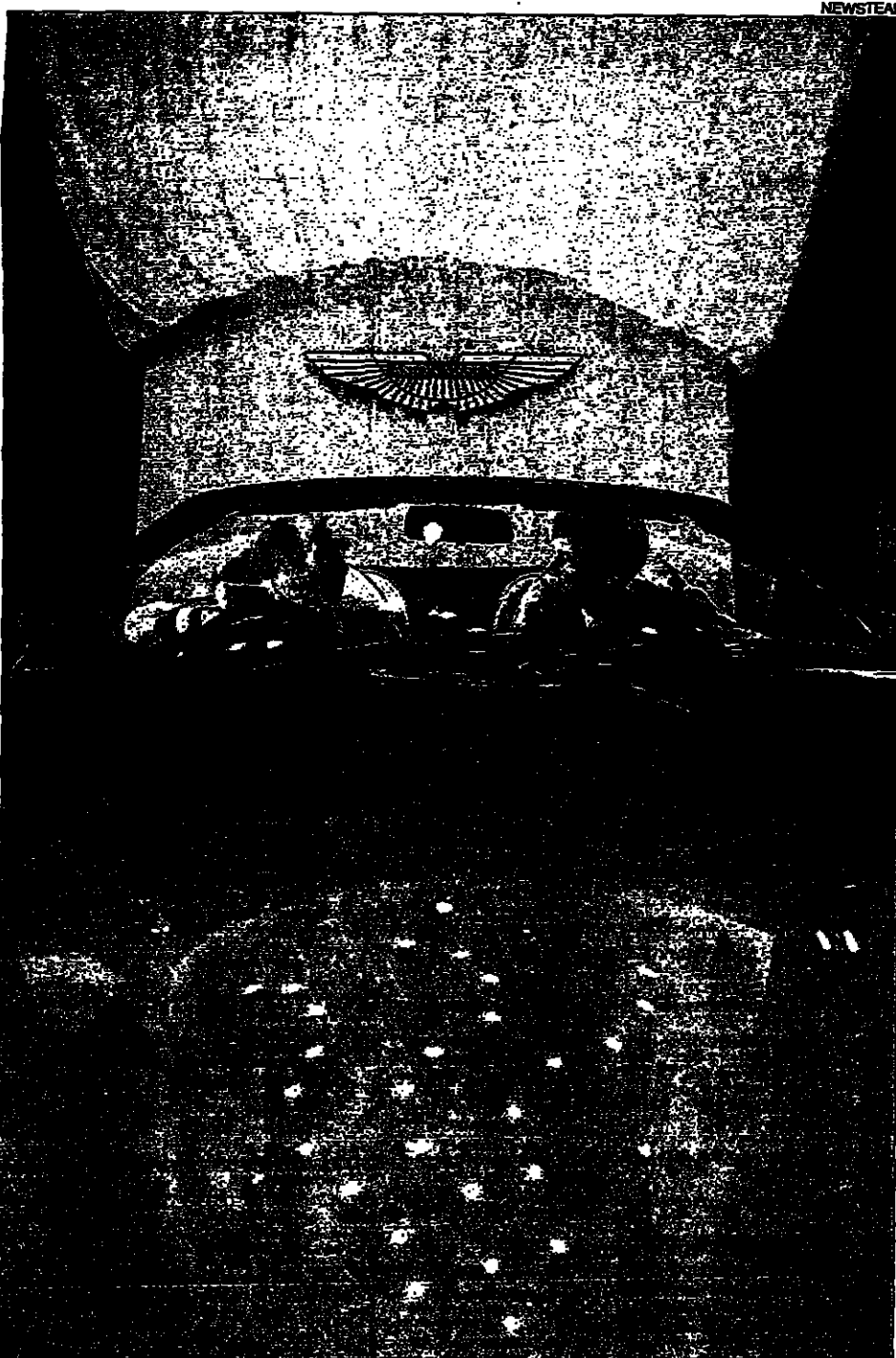
Things to do if you get bored looking at cars:

Make a bid for the classic Le Mans-winning Bentley "Old Number One", on the NGK Spark Plugs stand. Offers are invited in the region of £1.5million. That's about £1.3million more than any new Bentley.

Get your shoes shined: if they are looking a bit scuffed after all that hiking round the halls, make for the accessories pavilion. A team of polishers on the stand of Renapur, makers of Leather Balsam, will happily demonstrate its polishing and waterproofing properties on your shoes.

GET A NEW insurance quote: after settling its problems with Names, Lloyd's of London is represented at the show for the first time, reminding visitors that it has 15 per cent of the British motor insurance market, twice as much as any rival. Take up smoking: only if you are a registered puffer aged 18 plus can you enter the draw for a Renault Megane Coupe on the Rothmans Williams Renault stand, or for a free trip to the Italian Grand Prix with Marlboro McLaren.

There's no point in going to the motor show unless you can carry away a bag full of dreams. Of the best places to get one. Seat wins on capacity with a double-depth plastic carrier, but first prize must go to Citroën for the sheer élan of this silver shoulder bag with fetching red string.



Were they making way for Jaguar's much-lauded XK8, or just doing their own thing?

Aston runs its own show

One of the great names of British motoring is surprisingly absent from the show. But in a luxury complex on the other side of Birmingham from the National Exhibition Centre, Aston Martin has been staging a show of its own by invitation only writes Alan Capps.

At the Belfry Hotel, and Golf Course, customers nominated by Aston Martin dealers have been able not just to view the cars but to be driven in them by staff from a school run by ex-racing driver Peter Gethin.

When the doors of the NEC opened on Tuesday, there was a certain amount of speculation about Aston Martin's absence. The company, after

all, is owned by Ford, which also owns Jaguar — and the Jaguar XK8 is the undisputed star of the show. Hardly a critic has raised a voice against the XK8, except for a few who have carpied about its close resemblance to the much more expensive, but equally lauded, Aston Martin DB7. Had big brother Ford asked Aston Martin to leave the stage clear for Jaguar?

Unfounded speculation, say the people at Aston Martin's headquarters in Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire.

"This was a marketing and dealership decision. We decided this year to do things a little differently. At the Belfry we've got the same cars we would have had at the show,

but this way potential customers can be driven in them rather than just looking," said PR executive, Barbara Prince.

"I think it is quite a brave decision. Ten years ago we wouldn't have dared try such a thing, but now with the security of the Ford link we can try something different. There's certainly a place in the market for both cars, Jaguar are talking about producing 12,000 a year. We haven't made that many cars in our history."

"Anyway the cars have already appeared side-by-side this year at the Geneva motor show." Aston Martin's private show also offers customers a free shuttle service across to the NEC.

AWARDS

Oh dear, bad news for Japan

How ungrateful can you get? Jaguar converted its assembly area into a dining room so that Autocar could hold its awards ceremony there this week — and the magazine didn't have the decency to give the Jaguar boys a gong for their new XK8.

Instead, the car of the year was judged to be Ford's Ka, and the man of the year, Jac Nasser, the Ford executive who pushed the Ka onto the show stands at the British International Motor Show.

Top motor industry nobles crowded between the assembly lines at Coventry for a sensible pie-and-two-veg dinner, followed up with rhubarb crumble and custard, to discover what the motoring writers think about the cars they have spent years of their lives working on.

THOSE WHO win are mightily relieved, but just to show that there is no consistency in judgement in the supercharged world of the motor car, the happy winners who thanked their mums at the Autocar dinner were out of luck at a similar ceremony held by Car magazine.

Jaguar at least did get something from Car: the company won the prize for the best engine for its exciting AJ-V8, only the fourth generation of engines in 60 years. Alright, not so glamorous, but this is a tough year for winning accolades when so many good cars have been announced.

THE JUDGES for Car decided that the best car of the year was the Elise from Lotus, a model which also won the award as the most innovative for its lightweight aluminium chassis and brakes. Ka did not even get a mention, while Mercedes cleaned up with best-designed car for the SLK roadster, and Bruno Sacco, the designer, was voted best designer by his peers around the world.

Only the Japanese were truly miffed though — not a single gong between them, except for Honda, which won Lemon of the Year for producing the Legend executive model, "neither exciting to look at or drive," said Car. So there.

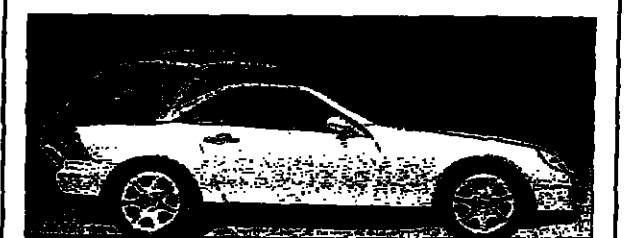


Ford's Ka won car of the year, at one ceremony at least

Car awards:
Best car — Lotus Elise
Most innovative — Lotus Elise
Best design detail — Porsche
Targa retractable glass roof
Best engineer — Jean Baudin
Peugeot chassis
Best engine — Jaguar XJ-V8

Best design — the Mercedes SLK
Best designer — Bruno Sacco
Designer's designer — Bruno Sacco
Lemon of the Year — Honda Legend

WHAT'S NEW AT THE SHOW



The Mercedes-Benz SLK is on our must-see list

THERE ARE more new cars to see at the motor show than ever before. Sports cars litter the stands but there are models to suit every taste. So Car 96 has selected the essential cars to see.

SPORTS CARS: Jaguar XK8, Mercedes SLK roadster, Porsche Boxster, Lotus Elise, Ferrari 550 Maranello, BMW Z3 roadster, Plymouth Prowler, Caterham Anniversary 7, Mitsubishi 3000GT, Porsche GT1, Spectre R42, Marcos Mantis

PEOPLE-CARRIERS: Chrysler Voyager, Renault Espace, Mercedes V-class, Renault Megane Scenic, Seat Alhambra,

Toyota Picnic, Vauxhall Sintra

HATCHBACKS: Audi A3, Fiat Marea and Marea Weekend, Kia Mentor

MINIS: Daihatsu Move and Grand Move, Ford Ka, Rover Mini

SALOONS: Alfa Romeo 155 TS tlv, BMW 520i, 540i, Ford Mondeo, Hyundai Sonata, Skoda Octavia, Toyota Camry, Volkswagen Passat

COUPES: Honda Prelude, Hyundai Coupe, Peugeot 406, Proton Persona, Bentley Continental T, Seat Cordoba SX, Volvo C70

CONCEPTS: 2096 Slug, Alfa Romeo Nuova, Daewoo Mya, Citroën Berlingo

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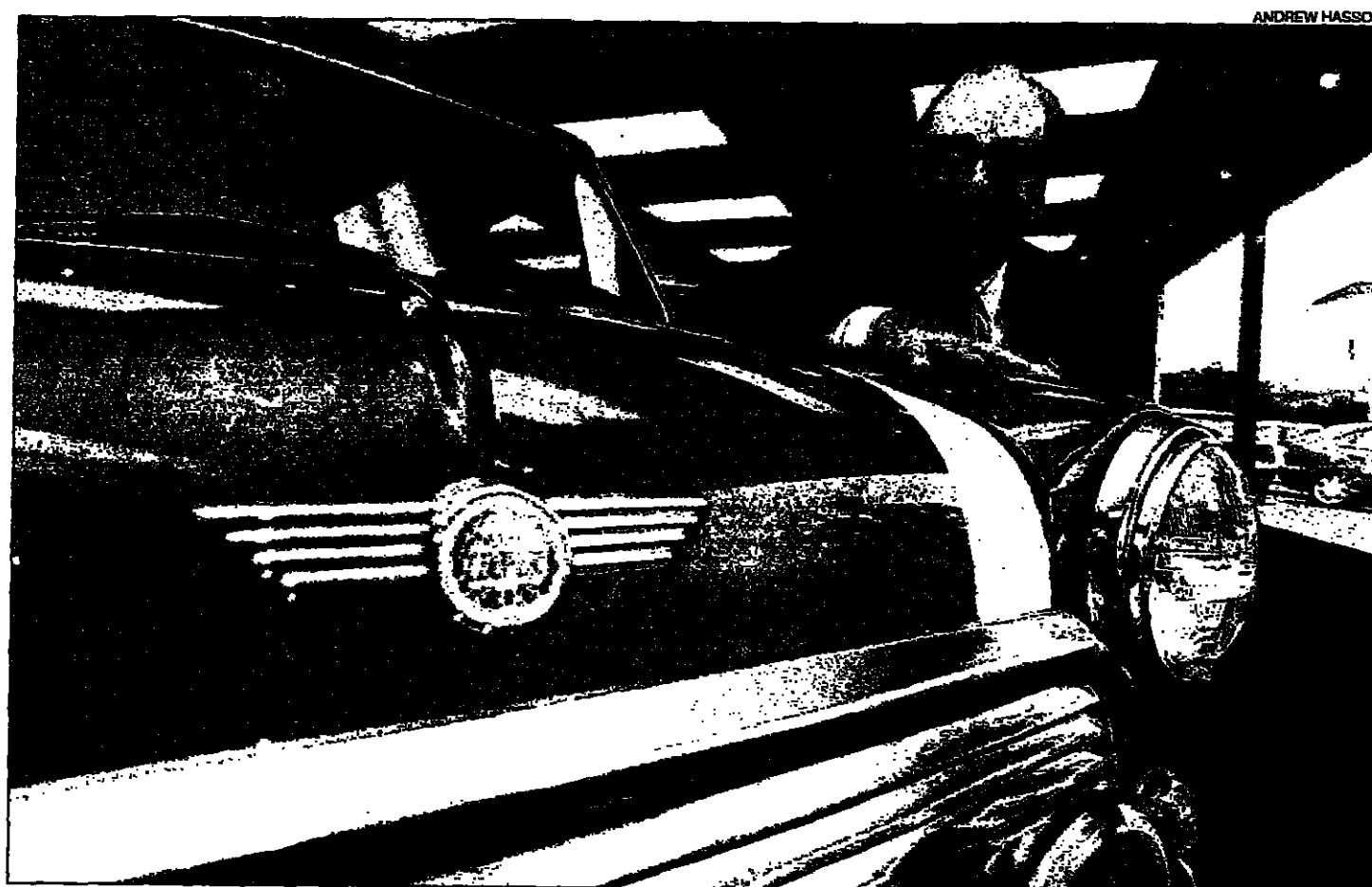
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MARKET LEADERS FOR OVER A DECADE

Somewhere in southern England a legend is at work on Rover's latest version, says Vaughan Freeman



Jack Brabham takes the salute after winning his second World Championship in a Cooper-built Formula One car in 1960 (left). Now, John Cooper is set to inject new life under the Mini's bonnet in the shape of his latest "S" model



ANDREW HASSON

Cooperman and the flying Mini

A new generation of Mini Cooper S cars is to be born, according to John Cooper, the man who should know. Cooper developed one of the trendiest cars of the Sixties, the all-conquering Cooper S, yet 30 years on, shows no signs of slowing down.

From his base in the unlikely setting of Ferring, a dot on the map close to the West Sussex coastal resort of Worthing, John Cooper still builds Cooper S cars for customers worldwide at the rate of two a week.

At the same time, he runs a major Honda franchise, a link that dates to the early 1960s when his Cooper Car firm effectively built Honda's first four-wheeled machine, a 1.5-litre Formula One car, at a time when the Japanese firm was building only motorcycles.

As the crowds flock to view the new Mini and Mini Cooper on the Rover stand at the British International Motor Show this week, the indefatigable Cooper will be busy finalising his plans to start turning the official Rover Mini Cooper into the Cooper S models which will go on sale early in the new year. Today his Cooper S cars cost £10,475, against £9,000 for the new Mini

Cooper, although his 1997 "S" is likely to be slightly dearer.

The new Cooper S will be more powerful, with 85bhp compared with the Rover Mini Cooper's 63bhp, and considerably faster, reaching 0-60mph in under ten seconds, with a top speed of around 100mph against 90mph. Key to the "S" allure will be the uprated acceleration thanks to a five-speed gearbox, and the distinctive badging so reminiscent of the past glories of British motor racing.

Although half of the 25,000 or so Minis still sold each year by Rover are Coopers, and the Mini Cooper racing heritage is second to none, the car was almost never born. Engineering genius and Mini inventor, Sir Alec Issigonis, did not believe a high-performance version of his new baby would sell.

But John Cooper, whose Cooper-Climax cars took Jack Brabham to the Formula One World Championship titles in 1959 and 1960, and whose Cooper Car company was once the world's largest builder of racing cars, had other ideas. He had met Sir Alec when the two were young men, racing their cars drag-strip style at the annual Madeira Drive seafront event in Brighton. They soon became firm friends.

Faced with the idea of a racing Mini, Sir Alec told his friend to take away a Mini and work on it, still to be convinced that more than a handful would sell, and highly sceptical that 1,000 customers could be found. One thousand sales was the magic figure that would enable the car to be homologated and thus become eligible for saloon car races and rallies.

The Mini was launched in 1959 and the Mini Cooper took to the road in 1961 with a tweaked Formula Junior racing version of the basic 1-litre, A-series Mini engine (still used in vastly improved form in today's car) and with what were then considered the new-fangled disc brakes.

Faster and more powerful even than the Cooper was the Cooper S, with 70bhp, and 1071cc, bred for racing and rallying, which arrived in 1963. A year later it took Paddy Hopkirk to the first of three Monte Carlo rally wins. There should have been four but the rally organisers, perhaps flustered that such a diminutive British car kept scooping all the silverware, deleted a fourth victory from the record books in a row over headlights.

In a deal agreed over a handshake, John Cooper got a £2 royalty for every Cooper version sold by BMC — the amalgam of Austin and Morris — as well as money for parts and cars for his Cooper S racing stable. Despite Sir Alec's fears, the Cooper sold and sold, and by the time Lord Stokes killed the car off in 1971, around 150,000 had been bought — at £2 a time for their originator.

Though corporate business killed off the Cooper, Cooper the man was considerably more difficult to put down and it is largely thanks to John Cooper's persistence that today's Mini Cooper exists at all.

The cars he exported to the passionate Anglophile Japanese market convinced Rover executives in Japan to commission him to build a 1275cc Mini Cooper in big numbers. Rover here was wary, so he went ahead instead with 1,000cc tuning kits and eventually sold 1,500 of them. Even the crude crates in which the tuning kits were packed became objects of Cooperabilia in Japan, where they were turned into coffee tables and bookcases.

The market for the Cooper was still out there, and John Cooper made the point strongly to the Rover management. After rigorous market research by Rover, the Mini Cooper returned in carburetted 1275cc form in 1990 and John Cooper launched the complementary "S" pack. The door opened by John Cooper leads straight to the new Mini Cooper.

So what does he think of the latest incarnation of his Mini Cooper baby? He says: "I know the Mini is getting expensive. There are still people though who love the Mini because it is fun to drive."

"The new car has various improvements, such as the front seats which fold as well as tilt forward to make it easier to get into the back. It is much quieter because the radiator has been moved to the front of the engine with an electric fan which robs it of about three horsepower. There is an airbag, side-impact bars in the door, and higher gear ratios to help make motorway driving more enjoyable."

"It is a great little car. It's quieter, it's fun, it still handles and feels like a Mini, and I am sure it will carry on until the end of the century when the new Mini arrives."

Already John Cooper is thinking ahead. Rover, makers of the Mini, is now owned by BMW, where Bernd Pischetsrieder, a self-confessed Mini addict and nephew of Issigonis, is in charge.

John Cooper has met the BMW chairman a number of times, and though BMW recently announced that the all-new Mini would be built from the turn of the century using engines built in Brazil by BMW in conjunction with Chrysler, Cooper says: "My own ideal would be to have the new Mini using Rover's own K-Series engines. That would give a range of cars from 1.1-litre to 1.8-litres. Imagine a Cooper S with the 1.8-litre K-series engine which Rover is using now in its MGF sports cars. That engine gives a thumping 143bhp! Quite enough I think to get the Mini Cooper S back into international competition."

The ideas do not end there: he would also like to see the Mini get power steering, a hatchback-style rear door, longer wheelbase and Hydrazas suspension. Like the Mini itself, the passing years only serve to make 73-year old John Cooper and the 37-year old Mini fresher and greener.

Icon still pedals ideas

JULIAN HARTNOLL

STEERING COLUMN

Suspension pioneer Alex Moulton tells Hilary Stone why driving is a waste of time



Moulton: in favour of vehicle ownership, but not necessarily their indiscriminate use

The two names go together as icons of British motoring: when Sir Alec Issigonis designed the Mini, he turned to Alex Moulton to design a suspension system, which would offer a comfortable ride, into such a small space. Moulton created the amazingly compact and effective rubber cone suspension.

His influence is still felt with his Hydrazas suspension fitted to the Rover 100 and MGF. The Mini was born in part of the Suez Crisis and petrol rationing. So, too, was the Moulton bicycle. Moulton had bought a lightweight bike to ride around on to save petrol but decided he could improve it and the Moulton bicycle with small wheels and rubber suspension was born in 1962.

Its mood fitted perfectly the Sixties and the age's obsession with quirky British design. In 1983 he launched a new series of high-performance small-wheeled bikes, the AM series, which is still made on his estate in Bradford-on-Avon.

What was your first car? My first car was one I built with a Locomobile steam engine with a flash boiler. I drove it up and down the estate. I followed this with an Austin Seven.

pension and the latest version of the Citroën XM which is a fine big car inside. I have recently gone back to a Creve product, a Bentley Turbo. I also have my special Mini Cooper S with interconnected Hydrazas suspension.

What is the car you dislike most? In the past it has been the Volkswagen Beetle. The rear-engine design was oversteering and unstable. I'm not fond of the old Volvos either.

What is your dream car? There isn't really one. I always have a range of cars according to the type of driving I am considering. I am pretty impressed with the Bentley Turbo.

What do you like about driving? Not very much. I am happy to be driven by a good driver. I am fortunate to have a retired police instructor as a driver. I think that driving is not a full commitment of a person: you're just sitting there with little physical effort, entirely nervous, yet you can't remove your attention at all to do something else.

What is your worst habit in the car? Passengers always complain when I put my hand over the air slots to see if there's any air coming out. They don't seem to like that, though I think it's perfectly reasonable.

What infuriates you most about other drivers? Simply aggression in driving.

What is the most unusual thing you have done in a car? To be marooned in a car during a bombing raid in the war. We tried to decide whether it was to be safer in the car or out, but stayed put.

What do you listen to in your car? Always Radio 3 and classical music. I won't listen to what I call jungle music.

for improvement programmes. I am enormously keen on traffic calming and horrified at the speed at which cars travel in urban areas.

What is your favourite car advertisement? I always regard car advertisements as an indication of the ones that are not selling and I automatically reject them.

Have you had any points on your licence? Yes, twice for speeding though, touch wood, not any accidents.

What is the future for personal transport? The bicycle will continue for a very long time. Its use is expanding because of all its good features. The ownership of private cars should be encouraged, but not their use. I like the idea that cars should be bought for personal mobility but used only sparingly. No car driver should expect the right to make a journey at his or her chosen time on his or her route. The bicycle and the pedestrian should be given every form of improved facility to move about freely. I think that is going to happen.

Money man wins £10,000



David Rokov (pictured left) kept his lead and won our F1 Fantasy Drive with 8,450 points. David, a financial adviser who lives with his wife, Carol, near Bracknell, Berkshire, plans to spend his £10,000 cash prize in two ways. "I will put most into a unit trust scheme for our new baby who is due in a few weeks. And with the rest I'll buy Premium Bonds," he said. David's final winning team, he changed drivers a number of times, was: Hill, Villeneuve.

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Coulthard, Barrichello, Lamy, Panis, Rosset and Badoer.

Our 15th race winner for the performance of his team in the Japanese Grand Prix is Ian Tucker, a civil servant, from Croydon, whose team, Tucker's Luck, scored 614 points. He wins a trip for two to next year's British Grand Prix. He was selected at random from two winning entries.

James Broadbent of Alcester, Warks won our Mallory Park competition.



TOTAL POINTS AFTER THE JAPANESE GP

Group	Driver	Last race points	Total Fantasy points
Group A	01 M Schumacher	92	1178
	02 J Alesi	12	1302
	03 D Hill	94	1297
Group B	04 G Berger	86	1094
	05 E Irvine	54	820
	06 J Villeneuve	56	1401
Group C	07 D Coulthard	78	1109
	08 M Hakkinen	92	1326
	09 H-H Frenzen	84	973
Group D	10 M Brundle	94	1046
	11 R Barrichello	80	1163
	12 J Herbert	80	1009
Group E	13 M Salo	26	884
	14 P Lamy	80	878
	15 P Diniz	18	842
Group F	16 U Katayama	44	737
	17 J Verstappen	98	673
	18 O Panis	90	1063
Group G	19 G Fisichella	0	377
	20 R Rosset	78	815
Group H	21 L Badoer	0	365
	22 A Montermini	0	167

THE JAPANESE GP LEADERBOARD

Qualifying points are scored by qualifying for the start of each grand prix within the first 20 positions on the grid:	
J Villeneuve 20 points; D Hill 19; M Schumacher 18; G Berger 17; M Hakkinen 16; E Irvine 15; H-H Frenzen 14; D Coulthard 13; J Alesi 12; M Brundle 11; R Barrichello 10; O Panis 9; J Herbert 8; U Katayama 7; M Salo 6; P Diniz 5; J Verstappen 4; P Lamy 3; R Rosset 2.	
Finishing points are scored by the top 20 drivers at the end of every grand prix:	
D Hill 20; M Schumacher 19; M Hakkinen 18; G Berger 17; M Brundle 16; H-H Frenzen 15; O Panis 14; D Coulthard 13; R Barrichello 12; J Herbert 11; J Verstappen 10; P Lamy 9; R Rosset 8; (only thirteen eligible drivers finished)	
Lap points one point for each lap completed:	
D Hill 52; M Schumacher 52; M Hakkinen 52; G Berger 52; M Brundle 52; H-H Frenzen 52; O Panis 52; D Coulthard 52; R Barrichello 52; J Herbert 52; J Verstappen 51; P Lamy 50; 50; R Rosset 50; E Irvine 39; U Katayama 37; J Villeneuve 36; M Salo 20; P Diniz 13.	
Improved position points three points for each place improved from starting grid to finishing position:	
P Lamy 18; J Verstappen 18; R Rosset 18; M Brundle 15; O Panis 15; J Herbert 9; M Hakkinen 6; R Barrichello 6; M Schumacher 3; D Hill 3; H-H Frenzen 3.	

THE F1 FANTASY DRIVE LEADERBOARD

Points	Driver
01 8,450 KO16	D Rokov
02 8,436 J Hunt U	J Hunt
03 8,406 Brothers Hotshots	W Lemon
04 8,404 RKV16	D Rokov
05 8,399 Aces	D Maynor
06 8,386 Cwywy	R Groves
07 8,347 Del Wall	K Walton
08 8,319 Scab Car	R Howells
08 8,319 The Great 8	M Neathan
08 8,319 Boy Racer 7	J Moore
08 8,319 Phoney	D Park
08 8,319 Cowgirls Racing	R Wheeler
08 8,319 Richie's Terrors	J Richardson
08 8,319 Chicken Roosters	S Maurice
08 8,319 Dream Team 8	D Springate
08 8,319 The Simpletons	M Sim

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY OCTOBER 19 1996

Lending figures show signs of fatigue

BY JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE British consumer revival appears to have lost some steam, with a clutch of lending figures from banks and building societies yesterday showing some weakening in borrowing.

Building society gross mortgage advances fell to £3.45 billion in September compared with £3.81 billion in August. Net advances dipped to £1.11 billion (£1.35 billion). In spite of these falls, the Building Societies Association noted that gross advances were still 30 per cent higher than a year ago and that the housing market recovery is well established.

Adrian Coles, director-general of the BSA, noted that new mortgage approvals, although slightly lower than August's figure, are still at high levels, and this suggests that the housing recovery will continue into the winter. There was also good news on savings, with an inflow of £512 million to societies in September, the strongest inflow since October last year.

Separate figures from the British Bankers Association showed that lending by leading British banks rose £2.45 billion in September, against £3.07 billion in August, and the average over the past six months of £3.32 billion.

The lending component of M4 money supply was also somewhat weak. Lending rose £3.5 billion, significantly lower than the £5.4 billion for August, according to Bank of England figures. M4 money supply rose 0.8 per cent. Its annual growth was 9.8 per cent, against 9.4 per cent in August — further above the Government's 3 to 9 per cent monitoring range. However, economists noted that M4 was boosted by an inflow of funds into sterling and that underlying growth may be easing.

Tim Congdon, a member of the Chancellor's independent forecasting panel, called for a 1 per cent rise in interest rates. He said raising rates now would avert the need for more drastic action later. Professor Congdon is concerned that a Clarke boomlet is being created for political reasons in the run-up to the election.



Playing cupid: Mike O'Brien, left, a Labour Treasury spokesman, and Richard Hammond, managing director of Business Blind Date, at the launch of the company, which aims to marry businesses and "angel" investors

UniChem rebids for Lloyds Chemists

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

UNICHEM launched a fresh £638.8 million bid for Lloyds Chemists yesterday after the Department of Trade and Industry gave it and Gehe, the German pharmaceutical company, clearance to rebid.

Gehe said it remains interested in acquiring the business, but stopped short of making a new bid. Lloyds advised its shareholders to take no action for the time being. A cash bid by Gehe is widely expected to be announced shortly.

Dieter Kanner, chairman of Gehe, attacked the UniChem offer, saying: "We believe UniChem would face significant risks in acquiring Lloyds Chemists given the relative size of the two companies."

Jeffrey Harris, chief executive of UniChem, described

Gehe's statement as "rather silly" and added: "Why don't they get on with it and make a bid? They should put their money where their mouth is."

The DTI said that UniChem and Gehe had fulfilled the conditions it had laid down in July by agreeing to sell much of Lloyds' pharmaceutical wholesaling operations, and it approved UniChem and Gehe's lists of around 20 prospective purchasers.

UniChem's new cash-and-shares bid received a setback when its shares slid 9p to 249p after the Office of Fair Trading said it would seek an end to resale price maintenance of over-the-counter drugs. UniChem said that the financial effect of the loss of RPM would be "immaterial to UniChem's profitability".

It said Moss Chemists, its 400-branch retail pharmacy

chain, makes most of its income from prescription pharmaceuticals. Lloyds shares rose 17p to 521p.

UniChem's bid has the same basic structure as the one that lapsed in March when it was referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. For every ten Lloyds ordinary shares, it is offering 16 new UniChem shares and 92p in cash. This values each Lloyds ordinary share at 491p.

For each Lloyds preference share, it is offering 59.742p in cash and 1.032 new UniChem ordinary shares. This values each preference share at 316.8p. UniChem, which is being advised by UBS and BZW, said there will be no special dividend and there is no underwritten cash alternative.

UniChem said the acquisition

should be "materially enhancing after the first 12 months". It has increased its rationalisation costs forecast from £26 million to £34 million.

Gehe, which is being advised by Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, said that UniChem had no experience of integrating an acquisition as large as Lloyds Chemists.

UniChem first bid for Lloyds, which has more than 900 retail pharmacies — making it second in size only to Boots — in January last year. Gehe then entered with a rival bid in February, prompting a higher bid by Lloyds. Gehe then increased its bid.

Analysts noted that UniChem's new bid was not described by the company as final.

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Rail deal curbs agreed by transport operator

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

STAGECOACH, the transport company, is to yield to pressure for anti-competitive curbs on its rail activities to avoid jeopardising its £825 million purchase of Porterbrook, the train-leasing company.

The Department of Trade and Industry said yesterday that it would refer the deal to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission unless Stagecoach gave pledges that it would "ring fence" some of its operations. The DTI backed a call from the Director-General of Fair Trading for trading conditions because of concerns over Stagecoach's ownership of train-operating companies and a rolling stock business.

Stagecoach said that it would agree to undertakings sought by the DTI and that they were broadly in line with conditions it had discussed with the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising.

It bought Porterbrook in August amid a "fat cat" controversy when it emerged that six directors and 43 staff shared a £80 million profit just seven months after the company was privatised.

The DTI has stipulated conditions for the Porterbrook deal so its rolling stock business cannot favour train companies controlled by Stagecoach. It also wants a confidentiality provision so Stagecoach cannot learn commercial details of rival train operators via their dealings with Porterbrook.

Other clauses would prohibit it from cross-subsidy, call for provision of information and for co-operation with other train companies.

Porterbrook is soon to announce a £90 million order for new vehicles to be operated by South West Trains, which is owned by Stagecoach.

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New solutions to the pensions dilemma



WEEKEND MONEY GUIDES



Guide 4
Keep more of your money from the taxman

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET	FTSE 100	FTSE All share	Nikkei	New York	Dow Jones	S&P Composite
	4082.1 (+11.0)	3.89%	1987.45 (+4.51)	2162.30 (+188.56)		
					6053.23 (-5.97)	
					707.66 (+0.67)	

US RATE	5 1/2%	5 1/4%	5 1/2%	5 1/4%
Federal Funds	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%
Long Bond	6.77%	6.77%	6.77%	6.77%

LONDON MONEY	3-mth Interbank	5 1/2%	5 1/4%	5 1/2%	5 1/4%
Life long off	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5
Future (Dec)	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5	109.5

STERLING	New York	1.5900*	(1.5875)
	London	1.5911	(1.5885)
	DM	2.4550	(2.4491)
	FF	6.2540	(6.2789)
	SFF	12.023	(12.0129)
	SFF	175.11	(177.94)
	Yen	89.3	(89.0)

DOLLAR	DM	1.5417*	(1.5430)
	DM	5.2095*	(5.2135)
	FF	1.2708*	(1.2690)
	SFF	112.54*	(112.20)
	Yen	97.8	(97.8)

TOKYO	Close	Yen	112.40
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NORTH SEA OIL	Brent 15-day (Jan)	\$23.80	(\$23.55)
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GOLD	London close	\$380.25	(\$380.45)
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* denotes midday trading price

Virgin Direct to sell pensions

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

VIRGIN DIRECT, the financial services division of Richard Branson's Virgin empire, is moving into personal pensions.

Announcing the launch of the personal pension, Mr Branson said there was a huge gap between consumer requirements and what the pensions industry had to offer.

Virgin Direct already provides life insurance and personal equity plans (PEPs). The pension will be simple, low cost and will be based on a fund that tracks the UK index. Virgin is entering an industry

that has proved highly controversial after allegations that hundreds of thousands of people were wrongly advised to leave lucrative occupational pension schemes and take out personal pensions. Also, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the State will not be able to support the aging population.

Mr Branson, who was valued at more than £1.6 billion last weekend, said the pensions industry had "let greed get the better of them" in the past. Increased competition was the answer, he said.

Amec talks target French holding

BY GEORGE SIVELL

AMEC, the British building group that less than a year ago fought off a bid from Kvaerner and made an unsuccessful offer for Alfred McAlpine, yesterday revealed that it was in talks to buy a stake in Spie Batignolles, the French electrical and construction business.

Any resulting deal, however, is subject to approval by Schneider, the holding company that controls Spie. Amec intends to take a substantial minority investment in Spie on the same terms as the Spie management. Amec would ultimately aim for a controlling

stake and float the French operation on the stock market. Amec put no figure on the size of the investment but said it would be met from resources. Amec shares reacted with a 2p fall to 106 1/2p. Peter Mason, chief executive of Amec, said the combined group was expected to have sales of £5 billion a year and would give Amec access to new markets in oil, gas and pharmaceuticals.

Last year Schneider took over the property development assets of Spie in a management and financial restructuring.

Asda p.p.p...picks up a court date

BY CLARE STEWART

AFTER cod wars and lamb wars, a new form of food rage is set to break out. P.P.P... Penguin wars. United Biscuits, pizzas to frozen food giant and makers of the familiar Penguin biscuit, has launched a legal action against Asda in a bid to halt sales of the supermarket's own-label Puffin biscuits.

United Biscuits says it has no option but to take legal action to defend its brand. "We respect Asda's right to introduce own-label brands but in this case we believe and have been advised that Asda has stepped over the line," said the

company. United Biscuits says the similarity in names will confuse shoppers. "All we are asking of Asda is to replace the Puffin brand with something which is not a sea-bird and easily mistaken for a Penguin." Asda launched its Puffin milk chocolate sandwich biscuit five weeks ago.

"We don't think there is any confusion among customers," said Phil Reed, Asda's public relations manager. "Penguin sales have remained constant, though Puffin is outselling Penguin by six to one." Asda is selling a seven-pack of Penguins for 67p a pack of



Jonsson: TV campaign

Puffins is priced at 58p. Asda has no plans to withdraw its biscuits. "We have spoken at length with United Biscuits but failed to reach agreement.

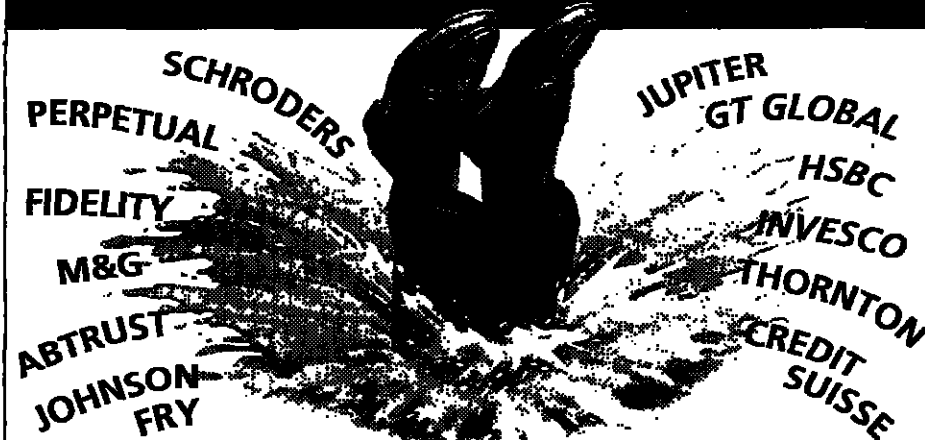
The best way now is for the matter to be resolved independently as quickly as possible," said Mr Reed.

Penguin biscuits have been made since 1933 and over 400 million are gobbled up each year in Britain, adding up to £40 million of sales.

The long running "P.P.P... Pick up a...Penguin" advertising campaign was used again in a recent TV campaign, which included celebrities such as Ulrika Jonsson and Danni Minogue promoting the biscuit.

The two sides in the High Court action are due to meet on Monday.

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TS19/10/96

A WORKING WEEK FOR: SIMON SHERWOOD

Fast track to success aboard Orient-Express

Jon Ashworth meets a global player who is determined to ensure that travel to exotic locations should be an instructive experience

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
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Friday

SIMON SHERWOOD used to spend his time in cement factories. Now he visits luxury hotels — one of the perks of being president of Orient-Express Hotels. Sherwood, 35, and newly married, spends his life flying

around the world, sampling cocktails in Cape Town, and dodging sandbanks on the Irrawaddy. Jobs like this do not appear in the classified ads.

Sherwood's step-father, James, is president of Sea Containers, the Bermuda-registered company that owns Hoverspeed, SeaCat and the InterCity East Coast rail franchise, along with a massive container-leasing business. The leisure division takes in some evocative names, from the Cipriani in Venice, to the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express, and the British Pullman train service. There is a half-share in Harry's Bar in London, discreet haunt of peers and tycoons, and a full stake in Gametrackers, a collection of safari lodges in the Okavango region of northern Botswana. Trains, river cruises and lodges alike fall under the banner of Orient-Express Hotels. This is the younger Sherwood's patch.

"So many times when I travel I wake up and I could be in any country in the world," says Sherwood, newly returned from a honeymoon in Ecuador. "A lot of our customers want to have more of an educational and cultural experience. They want to taste the food, they want to see the local life, live a bit of the country, not just go in and tick it off their list."

Orient-Express has been busy snapping up properties and launching new services in the five years since Sherwood joined the family business. The portfolio now includes the "21" club in New York, purchased last November, and Reid's in Madeira, added in July. In Burma, "Road to Mandalay", a luxurious, if controversial, river excursion, is soon to complete its first year's service. A resort in the Caribbean may be next. "We tend to be very opportunistic in what we acquire," says Sherwood. "We're not strategic. We don't say: 'I need five hotels in Asia in the next five years'. We're looking for very unique experiences for our guests, but we're not too bothered with where it is. We'll take the guest to the uniqueness."

From any other mouth, this could be so much corporate spiel — but not in Sherwood's case. Dapper and affable, he is eager to chat about life at Sea Containers House, overlooking the Thames in London. Born in Oxford, he went to Bishop's Stortford College, then read natural sciences at Cambridge, specialising in experimental psychology. "I used to have a wonderful little pet rat, which would come and sit on your shoulder," he recalls. "The only downside to the rat is that it was a total alcoholic. If you were holding a glass of wine it would

come whipping down your arm and dunk its head in. Sweet little rat. No longer with me."

After university, Sherwood spent a couple of years in France, Italy and Spain, brushing up on his languages. In 1986, armed with an MBA from Harvard, he signed up with Boston Consulting Group in San Francisco, finding time for yet another diversion: "I decided to go and teach in China for a bit."

Sherwood ended up in Nanchang in Jiangxi Province on a salary of \$50 a month. "There were 25 westerners in the region, which made me kind of like a movie star. They used to follow you round."

Confusion trailed in his wake. "You can't find your bicycle anywhere because they're all black, so I painted mine red, thinking: 'This is great, I'll be able to find it' — which I could. But the problem was that you're cycling along with everyone else, and a red bicycle and a foreigner is just too much. They all turned and stared at you. So when you got to the end of the road, you turned round, you'd see bicycles everywhere — hit into each other, hit trees..."

Sherwood arrived for work in San Francisco with nowhere to stay. The problem was swiftly resolved. "I met this young lady at a party and she said: 'I've fallen in love with this guy in New York, and I'm in New York the whole time, why don't you stay at my flat?'"

Sherwood returned to a palatial apartment with sweeping views over the Bay. His new-found friend handed over the keys, urged him to use her BMW, then dashed off to catch the 7.30 flight

to New York. "Only in San Francisco could that happen," says Sherwood. "I lived there for four years. She got married and then divorced, and moved in, and out, and we're great friends."

He relished his time at Boston Consulting. "I loved consulting, absolutely adored it," he says. "I had some wonderful assignments. I worked with a cruise line in Seattle, lived there for six months, [would] go up to the Yukon to give sales and marketing talks. He spent time in Mexico, advising washing machine groups and cement factories."

Sherwood returned to the UK in 1991, not without regret. San Francisco allowed him to indulge in sailing, skiing and other passions, including flying. "There's something about being an Englishman in America, and young and single, that is unbeatable." He became vice-president of strategy at Sea Containers, assessing the impact of the Channel Tunnel and other potential threats to business, then turned his eye to the leisure division.

One of his first targets was the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express, suffering a dearth of Americans in the aftermath of the Gulf War. "We reduced the schedule considerably, down to the level of the demand," he recalls. "It improved the bottom line result enormously."



On the occasions that he is not required to visit the company's hotels, Simon Sherwood is based at Sea Containers House overlooking the Thames

Sherwood took charge fully in 1994. Much of his first year was devoted to cutting costs and improving yields, as well as renovating hotels such as the Copacabana Palace in Rio de Janeiro, and the Splendido on the Italian Riviera. A current focus is South Africa, where his interests include the Mount Nelson Hotel in Cape Town, purchased in 1989 and refurbished at great expense. A new hotel, The Westcliff, opens in Johannesburg early next year.

Sherwood spends about half his time "on the road", visiting each of the nearly 20 hotels and attractions at least twice a year. He regularly travels to Heathrow by taxi-motorbike, strapping his luggage on the back.

"I love to travel light. I'm not a motorbike rider at all, but there's a certain thrill," he says, rugging at his mouth with his fingers to simulate a howling slipstream. He flies business class, usually overnight. "I have little pyjamas, put those on; my little teddy bear I take with me as well." Home is in Chelsea.

The only cloud, as such, looms in South-East Asia, where interests include the Eastern & Oriental Express, which runs between Bangkok and Singapore. A decision to route the train over the Bridge

on the River Kwai has angered war veterans. Further north, cruises on the Irrawaddy have angered opponents of the repressive Burmese regime.

Sherwood makes no excuses. Burma has problems, but he is not forcing anyone to go there. "Obviously, we started our investment process in the country before Aung San Suu Kyi was released," he says. "It takes years to put this together. To some extent, the more recent, and very fundamental, thing of 'should there be tourism to Burma?' has been something that's come since we got involved in the

country." Bookings have been "quite good", particularly from America, France, Germany and Japan.

Sherwood expects "Road to Mandalay" to make some money next year. "I think people have to make up their own minds," he says. "All I can say is it's a beautiful country, it's a lovely country, and you certainly have no impression of any kind of overbearing military regime."

Sherwood has another reason to feel a special attachment to Burma. He proposed to his then-girlfriend, Tina Curwen, halfway up a pagoda in the ancient city of Pagan. Tina is a dentist and he organised a geriatric stripper for her hen night — complete with removable dentures.

The couple were married at Buckland, Oxfordshire, on September 7, and took

over the Sherwood country house for the reception. Intent on avoiding hotels during their honeymoon, the Sherwoods flew to Quito in Ecuador, took a cruise to the Galapagos, ventured into the rainforest, then spent a week sailing off the coast in an old wooden ketch.

Back at his desk, Sherwood is happy to carry on squeezing margins and seizing opportunities. From losing money, Orient-Express Hotels is expected to make about \$30 million this year, on sales of \$300 million. Sherwood is suitably gung-ho. "I really enjoy what I'm doing. I just want to try to keep improving things until they get to such a great stage that the board feels they have to give me a huge bonus, and I can retire to the golf course."

His wife may have other ideas.

HIDDEN ASSETS

Squeeze on space leads to triumph of refurbishment

Number One Cornhill, that imposing five-storeyed domed building in the heart of the City of London, has just won a 1996 Heritage Award for the impressive restoration carried out by its owner, the Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Group. Standing out among all the heavy masculine banking architecture of the neighbouring Mansion House and Bank of England, the Royal's building looks soft, rounded and resolutely English. And there is something gently ecclesiastical too about the marbles and the gleaming brass interior of the main banking hall.

The street layout in this exclusive corner of commerce and wealth has barely changed in the past 400 years; and between 1668 and

Joanna Pitman views the restoration work that won the Royal a top award

1724 Number One Cornhill housed a cluster of small buildings including the home and bookshop of Thomas Guy, who made sufficient money selling Bibles to enable him to endow the hospital that still carries his name.

The only main thoroughfare to have been introduced since Guy's time is King William Street which in the early 1830s carved its way through a maze of little streets, laying waste to City taverns and restaurants and the offices of ancient City fraternities, the saddlers, merchant tailors, haberdashers, wax chandlers, barbers, brewers, coopers and coach-

makers. At about the same time the clustered buildings on the site were replaced by a single block, the "Globe Building", owned by the Globe Insurance Company that had grown rapidly since its founding in London in 1803. Consolidation in the industry in the second half of the 19th century led to the takeover of Globe Insurance by The Liverpool and London Insurance Company in 1864. As fast-growing insurance firms consumed rivals, their premium incomes ballooned and so did their names. This particular marriage producing The Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance

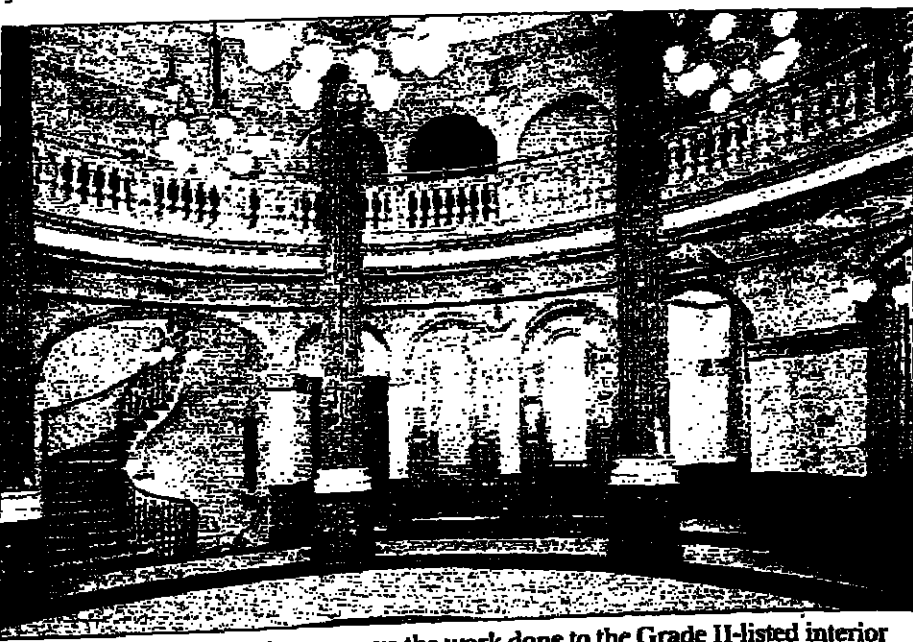
Company. In 1902 the 1830s Globe building was redeveloped. The present building, with its familiar dome, was completed in 1905.

In 1919 acquisition fever struck again and The Liverpool and London and Globe merged with Royal Insurance. The new company became known simply as The Royal Insurance Company. But again more space was required and the group bought the three adjacent buildings in 1936 and 1937, creating what eventually became, in 1981, Royal Insurance's group head office.

The award-winning refurbishment was carried out in 1995-96 to mark the Royal's 150th anniversary. And just in time too, for pressure on the limited office space had become so acute that hundreds of working desks had become tightly wedged on to the floor of the main banking hall.

Refurbishment was essential, but with a Grade II-listed interior it required the nod from English Heritage. Plans were made in accordance with 1905 drawings and Saul Jarrett Partnership were appointed architects.

The six-metre green marble columns were restored along with 14 further marble surfaces and slabs of missing marble cladding were replaced with plaster moulding. New office space has been created, state-of-the-art audio-visual display equipment has been installed, and the exterior of the building cleaned. The refit was completed in early 1996, just in time for the Royal's merger in July with Sun Alliance.



English Heritage had to approve the work done to the Grade II-listed interior

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Investor fatigue shows as shares reach record close

INVESTORS have found it hard to cheer this week, with share prices on the London stock market advancing to yet another record last night.

The FT-SE 100 index was hovering around 2,000, reflecting an uncertain start to trading on Wall Street after the latest trade figures. Even so, it finished 11.0 points up at 2,011.0, a rise on the week of 25 points, by the close of business a total of 682 million shares had changed hands.

Lloyds Chemists got off to a flying start with a rise of 17p at 521.5p, as Unilever was launched by its bid. It came just minutes after the Government signalled the go-ahead for Unilever to renew its bid to take over the German company Gehe for control of the chain of chemist shops.

Terms of the latest offer value Lloyds at 657 million, or 50p a share. The previous offer lapsed in March after being referred, along with an offer from Gehe, to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Now City speculators are waiting to see if Gehe will relaunch its own offer. Gehe said it remained interested in Lloyds. Its previous offer was worth 500p a share. Unilever finished the session 9p cheaper at 240p.

Within minutes of Unilever making its move, the Office of Fair Trading moved to bring an end to the system of resale price maintenance on branded over-the-counter drugs. This left Boots 5p lower at 638p, and Kingfisher, which owns Superdrug, 1p off at 654p. Asda, which started the row in the first place, was marked lower and then recovered to close 1p firmer at 114p. It later welcomed the move and said it could lead to price cuts on everyday healthcare products that would be worth £300 million to consumers.

SmithKline Beecham, the pharmaceutical manufacturer, slipped 1p to 790p ahead of third-quarter figures next week. A line of one million shares were traded through the market at 792p. A line of one million Glaxo was also on offer at £10.10 as the price rose 10p to £10.05.

Eurotherm enjoyed a mark-up of 28p at 600p after an upgrading by ABN Amro Hoare Govett, the broker. Rob Harris, analyst at Hoare, has turned bullish of the stock.



The OFT's decision to end RPM left Boots down 5p

raising his recommendation from "undervalued" to a "buy". He reckons the group will launch a record number of new products during the next few years, providing a big boost to profits. Cash flow is expected to grow sharply between now and the rest of the century, enabling the group to develop in the US. Shareholders may expect to benefit from a £40 million bonus in foreign

News International, publisher of The Times, continued to advance towards the 700p mark with a rise of 17p to 691p. The rise comes after some optimistic comments about BSkyB from Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation at its annual meeting. Shares rose 3p to 91p as a line of five million shares went through the market at 91p.

Alpha Airports, the airport caterer where Granada holds a 25 per cent stake, marked time at 101p amid mounting speculation that a number of bids may be about to emerge. City speculation suggests an overseas consortium has been taking a close look at Alpha, but may be pipped at the post by BAA. It is 11p dearer at 516p.

income dividends this year. Among leaders Rank Organisation came off 8p at 437p after some disappointing numbers from Xerox Corporation, its US associate, that sent its shares plunging \$10 at one stage.

NatWest rose 13p to 709p after a "buy" recommendation from Credit Lyonnais Laing, the broker.

BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster 40 per cent owned by

Pearson rallied 20p to 696p as the market continued to reflect on this week's appointment of Marjorie Scardino as the new chief executive.

Johnson Matthey was left looking a little lacklustre with a fall of 11p at 611p after a profits downgrade by UBS, the broker. It has reduced its shares from a "buy" to a "hold" after cutting its profits forecast for the current year by

£9 million to £10 million. It has also lowered its forecast for 1997 from £136 million to £125 million because of the depressed electronics market and problems at Cookson Matthey.

UBS has also cut its profits forecast for Cookson by £5 million to £185 million, but remains a buyer. Cookson was 3p easier at 246p.

News of a downturn in first-half profits and a bid for rival King & Shaxson left Gerrard & National, the discount house, nursing a fall of 27p at 272p. King & Shaxson stood out with a jump of 20p to 182p after digesting the terms from Gerrard valuing the business at £53.7 million.

At the same time pre-tax profits in the first six months at Gerrard slumped by almost half to £6.3 million. The group blamed the decline on the introduction of the gilt repo market, reduced turnover in foreign exchange and increased margin pressure in the derivatives markets.

Market-makers appear to be short of stock in Millennium & Copthorne, the hotel chain, where the price ran up 20p to 353p after a large buy order earlier in the week. Investors have also begun switching out of Stakis, its rival, down 3p at 98p. Millennium & Copthorne came to market in April at 278p. Stakis has been depressed by talk it will buy the Metropole hotel chain from Lomrho, unchanged at 164p.

GILT-EDGED: Further growth in money supply and worries about a revival of inflationary pressures left prices down on the day. The short end of the market bore the brunt of the losses after a call by Professor Tim Congdon, one of the Chancellor's panel of independent advisers, for a full point rise in interest rates. He said the move was needed to nip inflation in the bud.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt finished 5.1p lower at £109.16 as a total of 60,000 contracts were recorded.

Treasury 8 per cent 2015 finished 7.3p lower at £100.52, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 fell 7.3p to £103.32.

NEW YORK: On Wall Street several top names delivering disappointing results came under selling pressure and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 5.97 points lower at 6,053.23.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):		
Dow Jones	6053.23	(-5.97)
S&P Composite	707.06	(-0.67)
Tokyo:		
Nikkei Average	21612.30	(+185.56)
Hong Kong:		
Hang Seng	12510.05	(+73.25)
Amsterdam:		
Euro Index	994.33	(+1.39)
Sydney:		
ASX	2295.00	(+1.2)
Frankfurt:		
DAX	2734.82	(+16.56)
Singapore:		
SEAC	2084.52	(+1.20)
Brussels:		
General	9945.52	(+30.54)
Paris:		
CAC-40	2185.23	(+16.90)
Zurich:		
SMI	791.50	(+0.90)
London:		
FT 30	2665.2	(-0.8)
FT 100	4053.1	(+1.0)
FTSE Mid 250	5150.0	(+1.0)
FTSE 250	2014.3	(+4.8)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	1787.3	(+16.48)
FT All-Share	1987.45	(+4.51)
FT Non Financials	2281.38	(+4.2)
FT Financial	1154.0	(-0.57)
FT Govt Sec	94.00	(-0.01)
Banglalink	60.00	
SEAC Volume	662.00	
USM (Datastream)	204.33	(+0.54)
US\$	1.5918	(+0.0055)
German Mark	2.4888	(+0.0075)
Exchange Index	82.3	(+0.2)
Bank of England official doc (Apr)	1.297	
ECU	1.604	
RPI	153.8 Sep 2 (1991) Jan 1997-100	
RPIX	153.6 Sep 2 (1991) Jan 1997-100	

RECENT ISSUES

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MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
King Shaxson	182p (+20p)
Pochoth	150p (+15p)
Eurotherm	600p (+28p)
Barclays	840p (+11p)
Airtours	633p (+8p)
Diploma	386p (+8p)
Nat West	709p (+13p)
Millennium & Cop	353p (+29p)
Tottenham Hot	520p (+27p)
ADT	1210p (+40p)
FALLS:	
Gerrard Nat	272p (-27p)
JIB Sports	324p (-12p)
Unichem	249p (-9p)
Time Products	388p (-13p)
United	546p (-14p)
Chicochick	372p (-10p)
Chrysalis	505p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 43

TEMPUS

Third time unlucky?

THE timing of Unilever's launch of its third bid for Lloyds Chemists was extraordinary: just 20 minutes after the Department of Trade and Industry gave the all-clear, and half an hour before the Office of Fair Trading announced it was ordering a review by courts of resale price maintenance on over-the-counter medicines.

The speed with which Unilever moved after the DTI clearance indicates the importance of the 900-plus retail branches of Lloyds to the pharmaceutical wholesaling group.

At first sight, the OFT decision looks detrimental to the value of Lloyds Chemists; companies such as Asda may soon be able to sell discounted paracetamol and aspirin. Were that to be the case, Unilever's haste yesterday would look clumsy. In fact, the uncertainty over drug pricing makes Lloyds an even more

attractive target for both Unilever and Gehe. For Unilever to prosper under a future liberalised pricing regime for medicines, size will be crucial. Although shares in Boots were marked down yesterday, the biggest pharmaceutical chain with its unrivalled buying power will benefit as much as the supermarket chain with unrestricted pricing: it is the independent chemists that will suffer the most.

Gehe's attack on Unilever's acquisition yesterday, and its statement that that quarter suggests another cash bid from that quarter is imminent. However, much Unilever wants Lloyds, the reality is that the OFT has made investors nervous. If Gehe puts in a cash bid worth more than Unilever's cash-and-shares package, investors will probably ignore the shares and pocket the German cash.

Cookson / Johnson Matthey

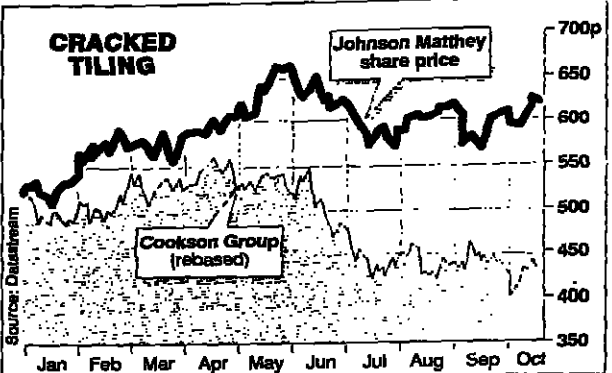
SINCE their failed attempt to merge, Cookson and Johnson Matthey must find it irritating to be lumped together, like disagreeable twins. However, their only common interest has recently become a problem.

Cookson Matthey Ceramics, the joint venture in ceramic materials, has been a star performer thanks to buoyant demand for tiles. Construction activity has boosted the profits of the joint venture that supplies glazes and pigments to tile manufacturers. Weakness in construction has slowed demand for tiles and that has hurt suppliers to the industry. Zircon factories no longer operate at full capacity and analysts have sliced £10 million from the expected

profits of the joint venture this year and they predict flat profits in 1997.

For Johnson Matthey the £5 million downgrade on ceramics comes at the same time as weakness in platinum prices, still a major part of its business. Profit forecasts for 1996 have been cut by between £9 million and £10 million. Cookson, how-

ever is looking inexpensive. Although taking its share of the ceramics pain, the company is in the middle of a cost-reduction exercise that should reduce overheads by £10 million in a full year. The electronics slump has probably bottomed out and so have Cookson shares, which now trade at a 10 per cent discount to the market.



Japan

THE Japanese go to the polls tomorrow and the signals are that there could be a good turnout for the right-wing Liberal Democratic Party and a working majority. Any sign of a cohesive government in a country that has for years been fractious and inward-looking would be good news for investors. Not least for the many who bought Japanese funds early this year, hoping for a strong revival of the Nikkei after six years of slump.

But it never happened. Japanese institutions remained on the sidelines and continued to put money into foreign bond markets in a search for higher yields. Recovery in domestic demand has been patchy and growth in GDP during the current year is expected to be only 1.7 per cent.

A victory for the LDP could result in a small rally in the Nikkei, which remains stubbornly below 22,000 — the party has hinted at a five tri-

lion yen (£28 billion) supplementary budget aimed at stimulating construction. But this looks more like traditional Japanese vote-buying than economic policy. The fundamentals in Japan are changing slowly, but Japanese industry still suffers from over-manning, low returns and a general indifference to investors. Import substitution is beginning to affect the economy putting downward pressure on prices.

None of this suggests a bounce in Japanese equities. If local investors are unconvinced, there is little reason to second-guess them.

Gerrard & National

GERRARD & NATIONAL was once just a discount house but yesterday's merger with King & Shaxson takes the group further into the deep-carpeted world of private client stockbroking and fund management.

Weak first-half figures

K&S shareholders have most to gain short-term from the takeover. Gerrard investors saw their investment sink below £3, a far cry from the £5 per share earlier this year. However, once the merger has bedded down, analysts expect the two businesses to deliver profits of more than £30 million in 1997-98 and the benefits of the deal to flow through thereafter.

Edited by CARL MORTISHED

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

Current price	Week's change
Blenheim	437p
Manchester United	544p
Airtours	633p
Wessex Water	517p
Waboune	140p
BSkyB	691p
W1 Smith	471p
Alexandra Workwear	102p
Dixons	578p

COMMODITIES

Commodity	Current price	Week's change
Crude Oil (Brent)	25.05	+0.40
Crude Oil (WTI)	24.50	+0.40
Crude Oil (Dubai)	23.80	+0.35
WTI Intermediate (Dec)	25.25	+0.45
WTI Intermediate (Jan)	24.75	+0.40

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

Contract	Open	High	Low	Sett	Val
FT-SE 100	4080.0	4090.0	4070.0	4080.0	1424
FT-SE 250	4080.0	4090.0	4070.0	4080.0	1
Three Month Sterling	90.95	91.00	90.90	90.95	1596
Three Month Euro Yen	96.10	96.15	96.05	96.10	300
Three Mth Euro DM	96.10	96.15	96.05	96.10	300
Long Gilt	110.00	110.05	109.95	110.00	5880
Japanese Govt Bond	122.75	122.90	122.60	122.75	3332
German Gov Bd Bond	121.90	122.00	121.80	121.90	194
Three Month ECU	96.30	96.35	96.25	96.30	1278
Euro Swiss Franc	96.30	96.35	96.25	96.30	1278
Italian Govt Bond	122.40	122.50	122.30	122.40	4023
Previous open interest: 8450					

OTHER STERLING

Contract	Open	High	Low	Sett	Val
Argentine peso	1.9917	1.9943	1.9891	1.9917	1943
Australia dollar	2.0018	2.0036	1.9966	2.0018	2036
Belgian franc	1.3590	1.3600	1.3580	1.3590	1000
Canada dollar	1.5412	1.5417	1.5407	1.5412	1000
Denmark	7.4617	7.4627	7.4607	7.4617	1000
France	1.6362	1.6367	1.6352	1.6362	1000
Germany	1.5412	1.5417	1.5407	1.5412	1000
Hong Kong	7.7317	7.7327	7.7297	7.7317	1000
India	1.6362	1.6367	1.6352	1.6362	1000
Italy	1.5412	1.5417	1.5407	1.5412	1000
Japan	1.1243	1.1248	1.1233	1.1243	1000
Netherlands	2.2002	2.2007	2.1992	2.2002	1000
Norway	6.5295	6.5305	6.5275	6.5295	1000
Spain	1.6362	1.6367	1.6352	1.6362	1000
Sweden	1.4138	1.4143	1.4128	1.4138	1000
Switzerland	1.7001	1.7006	1.6991	1.7001	1000

DOLLAR RATES

Contract	Open	High	Low	Sett	Val
Australia	1.5272	1.5280	1.5260	1.5272	1000
Belgium (Com)	1.3590	1.3600	1.3580	1.3590	1000
Canada	1.5412	1.5417	1.5407	1.5412	1000
Denmark	7.4617	7.4627	7.4607	7.4617	1000
France	1.6362	1.6367	1.6352	1.6362	1000
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Sweden	1.4138	1.4143	1.4128	1.4138	1000
Switzerland	1.7001	1.7006	1.6991	1.7001	1000

WALL STREET

Contract	Open	High	Low	Sett	Val
AMEC Inc	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Amgen Corp	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
AT & T	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Boeing	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Chrysler	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Exxon Corp	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
General Electric	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
IBM Corp	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Johnson & Johnson	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Microsoft	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Oracle	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Rockwell International	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Sony Corp	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
United Technologies	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Walt Disney	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100
Worldwide Fund	39.00	39.50	38.50	39.00	100

FTSE VOLUMES

Friday	Open	High	Low	Sett	Val
79 1/2	79 1/8				
18 1/2	18 1/4				
18 1/2	18 1/4				
18 1/2	18 1/4				
27 1/2	27 1/4				
27 1/2	27 1/4				
70 1/2	70 1/4				
70 1/2	70 1/4				
80 1/2	80 1/4				
36 3/4	36 1/2				
41 1/2	41 1/4				
62 1/2	62 1/4				
31 1/2	31 1/4				
74 1/2	74 1/4				
68 1/2	68 1/4				
90 1/2	90 1/4				
41 1/2	41 1/4				
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75 1/2	75 1/4				
31 1/2	31 1/4				
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HERE WE GO 33

Football fans dribble all the way to the bank

WEEKEND MONEY

TESSA'S A STAR 39

Her public calls for more of the same



Borrowers face a stressful and unnecessarily long wait for mortgages, says Sara McConnell

Home groans as lenders dawdle

Beat the mortgage system by making a flying start

WHEN you apply for a mortgage, you can save time by getting and giving as much information as possible at the beginning.

London & Country Mortgages has supplied the following questions for Weekend Money readers to ask lenders:

- How long will it take for you to produce a full written mortgage offer?
- Is the loan portable if I wish to move during the commitment period?
- What is your ordinary variable rate?
- Do you charge an indemnity guarantee premium? If so, how much is it?
- Can this premium be added to the loan? If so, up to what percentage?
- What is the lock-in period on the loan I am interested in?
- Are there any other charges on top of early redemption penalties during the lock-in period?
- Do I have to take out compulsory insurance with you?
- Will you include regular bonuses and overtime when working out how much I can borrow?
- Do I have to pay a valuation fee, and can you give me details of costs of more thorough surveys?
- Can my solicitor act for you as well as me?
- What is the cost of stamp duty on properties over £60,000?

London & Country suggests: "If you have not found a specific property but know how much you are likely to want to borrow, ask the lender for some costings in advance. Ask if it will accept an application before you make an offer on a property, with no fees or commitment on your part. This way they can do the necessary credit checks and obtain your references ready for when you do find somewhere."

Desperate borrowers are having to wait months for mortgage offers from major lenders who claim they have been caught unaware by the upturn in the housing market. Some borrowers risk losing a their chosen property because they do not have funds in place to complete quickly.

Such delays are certain to tarnish the gloss of cheap mortgage deals designed to tempt reluctant buyers back into the market. In some cases, as at the Bristol & West Building Society, lenders offering the cheapest deals have not been able to handle the extra volumes of business attracted by the marketing hype.

One Weekend Money reader applied for a mortgage from the Royal Bank of Scotland in July. It took the bank until the end of September to finalise the application. The delay would have deprived her of two months' of a discounted first-time buyer rate without The Times's help. Other Royal Bank customers are waiting up to four weeks. Some borrowers at the Alliance & Leicester have been waiting a month for the building society to produce mortgage funds. Leeds & Holbeck customers have had to wait three weeks.

These problems follow earlier delays at the Bristol & West, exposed by Weekend Money in August this year. Borrowers faced waits of up to nine weeks. The society claims it has now taken on and trained new staff and has reduced waits to 14 days. It blames its difficulties on "a phenomenal amount of business". Independent mortgage brokers this week accused building society and bank staff of a "lack of urgency". Phillip Cartwright, of London & Country Mortgages, said: "At times, even when things are straightforward, there is delay. Building societies seem to have this attitude that there is nothing after 5pm. Application forms are too often given to inexperienced junior staff to process," he adds. "If they miss things, borrowers are subjected to further delays."

Ian Darby, of John Charcol, says: "Most lenders have downsized and were taken by surprise when the market picked up. There are offer periods of four to five weeks from some lenders like the Alliance & Leicester. In the South East, transactions are urgent because there is a shortage of property and things are snapped up quickly." He added that the issue of good service will become more important as the market continues to rise.

Alliance & Leicester admitted it has been having "a few teething problems" with new mortgage administration arrangements. It said: "We have been moving mortgage business away from branches and into mortgage-only units. This move came along at the same time as the upturn in the market, and one or two units, particularly in the South East, have had problems because of a combination of the moving process and the upturn."

"We are installing new computer systems and redirecting business to other units. The worst is over, but we would not want to indicate that this is not a problem for those affected," Leeds & Holbeck said it has taken an average of 20 days to complete mortgage applications at its Bristol office this year, but in the last month it has cut this to 18 days, with half completed in 15. The society has been offering competitive deals.

But brokers say 15 to 18 days is still too long and it should be possible to turn round applications in 12 days or less. Mr Cartwright said: "There may be factors outside the lender's control. For example, the return of references by landlords or employers. Borrowers should be prepared to nudge people to reply by return."

Lenders confess they are sometimes slow to turn round applications. But they say part of the reason for delays is that they are more cautious about checking the creditworthiness of prospective borrowers. Mike Stark, head of new business at Royal Bank of Scotland's Greenock mortgage centre, said: "Lenders are beginning to be more particular and our credit checks are more thorough." He is critical of mortgage brokers for giving borrowers an unrealistic assessment of the time their applications will take.

The Royal Bank takes up to four weeks to process applications, but Mr Stark is aiming to cut this to three. He emphasises that the case of Louise Wingrove (see opposite) was a one-off "catalogue of disasters" which indicated "important lessons" for the bank in reviewing internal procedures.

Royal Bank pays for blunders



A first-time buyer whose mortgage application took more than two months to be processed is to receive £450 compensation from the Royal Bank of Scotland after the intervention of *The Times* (Sara McConnell writes).

Louise Wingrove suffered a catalogue of appalling delays and breakdowns in communication, including a six-week delay in carrying out a valuation of the flat she and her partner, Keith Robinson, were buying in Lewisham, southeast London. Ms Wingrove's mortgage application,

made at the end of July, was not processed until the end of September.

Getting a mortgage should not have been difficult. Ms Wingrove is a teacher with a secure income and a clean credit record. The loan was being advanced on her income alone. She had no existing mortgage to pay off and she already banked with the Royal Bank.

This was partly why she chose to go for its first-time buyer discount deal, which offered 3.25 per cent off the bank's standard variable rate until August 1997. She said she wanted to move by the end of August. But two weeks into August,

when Ms Wingrove telephoned to find out if the valuation had been done, she was told her application had been "forgotten at the bottom of the pile".

Every time Ms Wingrove contacted the bank, she was passed from one person to another. She was unable to make inquiries through her branch in Manchester, but was forced to contact the Edinburgh head office. Staff failed to keep her informed.

Royal Bank this week apologised to Ms Wingrove. It will pay £335 for two months of lost discount, and £115 in part-repayment of the valuation fee.

Delve deeper into deals

What you see may not always be what you get when it comes to mortgages. The windows of high street banks and building societies are festooned with advertisements promising huge discounts, cashbacks and low fixed rates. But borrowers must look further than the headline rate if they want to get the best deal, according to London & Country, the independent broker.

Lenders are so desperate that they are offering to all borrowers rates which would until recently have been reserved for first-time buyers, says Patrick Bunton of London & Country. But mortgages have become more and more complicated as lenders try to beat their rivals.

Mortgage tables ranking lenders just according to rates only tell half the story, says

London & Country's Phillip Cartwright. He favours a more detailed analysis of some of the best rates on offer:

■ **Principality Building Society:** 4.99 per cent discount until November 1, 1997. The low discounted rate is similar to others, but the base rate is very low at 6.49 per cent. The discount will cut the current rate to 1.5 per cent. The drawback is that buildings or buildings and contents insurance is compulsory.

■ **National Counties Building Society:** 2 per cent discount until March 1, 1999. This gives a rate of 4.99 per cent. Possibly the best deal of all because of a short redemption period. There is a lock-in period of only three years, rather than the five, six or even seven years applied by many lenders. The early redemption penalty during the discount

period is 90 days, rather than the usual 180 days or reclaim of the total discount. After three years, you receive a loyalty discount. The only problem is that you must have a deposit of at least 10 per cent. ■ **Nationwide:** 1.3 per cent discount for three years. This gives you a rate of 5.19 per cent. Again the society's low base rate of 6.49 per cent gives this the edge. Nationwide is committed to keeping its base rates low as a pledge of its support for mutualism, so even the variable rate would be a good deal. There is no compulsory insurance, your valuation fee will be refunded and you get back £300.

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

Save the savings twins

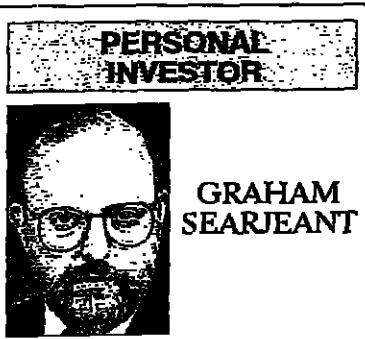
Savers beware. Among superior persons it has become fashionable to knock the most successful new savings vehicles of the past decade. In these put-downs, personal equity plans (PEPs) and tax exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) are lumped together as though they were interchangeable. They are not.

Tessas were brought in belatedly at the end of the last boom. Their direct aim was to divert potential current spending into savings by giving us a tax incentive to tie up for longer casual bank and building society deposits. At the time, interest rates were high.

PEPs offered tax incentives to tempt us to put more of our core savings into individual company shares. They aimed to complement privatisation by spreading mass share ownership to other UK quoted companies. There was also a political purpose: to give millions more people a direct stake in the profitability of British companies.

Predictably, things did not work as intended. By the time Tessas started up, boom was falling headlong into slump, eventually bringing deposit rates down in its train. PEPs only took off when they were hijacked by the collective investment industry. They have accelerated the drift from direct share ownership trusts instead of reversing it. And single market rules require investment in all EU stocks to be treated equally.

As vehicles to encourage and channel savings, however, they have proved so popular that each covers savings of about £30 billion. That popularity is now making them enemies. PEPs and



PERSONAL INVESTOR

GRAHAM SEARJEANT

Tessas both shelter investment income from tax. The more popular they are, the more tax revenue they cost. Like any tax break, this pushes tax rates higher than they need otherwise be. Blinkered tax cutters now see PEPs and Tessas as middle-class fat-lambs to be plundered in the greater cause or be replaced by feebler schemes targeted at low earners.

Tax advantages were not, however, the only secret of success. Flexibility is just as vital. Money can be put in when it is available and is not tied up for ever. PEPs, in particular, score more for simplicity than for tax advantages. This causes much tut-tutting among those who do not trust people with their own money. For them, flexibility makes PEPs and Tessas too short term for real savings, allowing the irresponsible to blow the funds instead of using them for specially retrainable purposes such as mid-life retraining or long-term care.

That logic would insist on savings vehicles that are so unpopular that

people must be coerced to use them. Naturally, all deny any such intentions in the run-up to an election. Tories insist that private pensions will remain voluntary, along with long-term care plans. Labour insists it will keep tax benefits for PEPs and Tessas, though the latter might be brought into a new "individual savings account". If that is to be successful, it will need to be as flexible.

The more you think about pensions, the clearer it becomes that they are not the complete answer to everything. They can commit too much to purposes that are too narrow. They hinder the passing of wealth from parents to children. They cost many billions more in tax allowances, because contributions have to be tax-deductible to tempt people in.

Contributors cannot even be entirely confident that benefits due decades hence will emerge intact. The fundamental issue of how to draw income in retirement from pension savings is in flux. A bizarre alliance between the pensions industry and Treasury will probably sooner or later do away with tax-free lump sums.

Pensions are essential, but most people would be foolish to tie all their long-term savings in the pension strait-jacket, still less into other more specific schemes. In the real world, there is no clear divide between short-term and long-term savings, more a spectrum in which people hope that their savings will become long term. In an age of uncertainty, simple, flexible, and demonstrably attractive schemes should be the backbone of any savings drive.



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PRUDENTIAL

Insurers display unhealthy habits

Edwards raised a rumour when she suggested that Northerners should swap fags and fried food for aerobics and fibre. A decade later, her controversial views on the unhealthy habits of those who live north of Watford still hold sway in some sections of the life insurance industry. Surprisingly, some of those guilty of such prejudices are not long established groups but newcomers with a reputation for judging each case on its merits. As we report below, Virgin Direct, a company that prides itself on being different from the rest, quoted a higher life cover premium for a woman living in the North. Based purely on her address, she was presumed to be less healthy than her twin sister from the South West. These assessments were based on mortality statistics indicating that southerners are in less haste to



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

shuffle off this mortal coil. However, when you buy life cover you answer a number of questions about your health and lifestyle. These should be more bearing on the premium quoted than your address. But it seems that your whereabouts provide more compelling evidence of your life expectancy than your low-fat diet. The conclusion of this new example of the north-south divide is that anyone arranging life insurance must ask the insurer whether

they operate a regional bias. Southerners should then take advantage of the lower rates on offer. Northerners should jog to a competitor.

Worth the wait?

BEFORE the recovery of the housing market, building society bosses would wax lyrical on the subject of long-absent first-time buyers and pine for their return. Curiously, however, the long-

awaited improvement in prices has not been accompanied by a warm welcome for this important class of borrower. Weekend Money is receiving many reports of delays in the processing of applications from creditworthy candidates (see page 31).

It seems that some lenders see new customers as a disruption to the smooth running of their businesses, and much preferred the sluggish state of affairs when the market was in the doldrums.

THIS week five Morgan Grenfell executives were dismissed after the scandal that has surrounded the group's European unit trusts. Some left with six-figure sums in their pockets. I hope that the 90,000 investors in these three trusts will also soon have news of their rightful compensation.

Gillian Barton offers a geographer's guide to life insurance

Regions to be cheerful

I had a nasty shock this week. I discovered that I am 10 per cent more likely to meet with an untimely end than is my twin sister, Sue. It's not that she's a goody two-shoes and I spend my weekends taking bungee jumps and my nights in smoky clubs. Neither have I inherited some awful gene that has managed to bypass her system.

No, my crime, in life insurance terms, is simply that I live in the North. We both have homes in leafy suburbs, but mine is on the outskirts of Hull and my sister's is close to Bournemouth. Because I live in Yorkshire and she lives in Dorset, telephone insurance firms like Virgin Direct and Direct Line want to charge me more for my life insurance.

We're not identical, but we are pretty much the same weight and height. When we asked Virgin Direct and Direct Line for insurance quotes, we answered all the questions about our health, occupation, hobbies and lifestyle in the same way. However, Virgin Direct quoted me a premium of £17.04 for £100,000 of life cover. The quote for my sister was £15.53, around 9.7 per cent less.

At Virgin Direct, the further north you live, the higher the premium. The company says that it bases this stance on the mortality statistics.

"Almost all other companies lump everyone in the same risk pool," said Martin Campbell, product development manager at Virgin Direct. "We have gone much further and believe we end up charging people a much more accurate premium based on their own specific circumstances."

"We do have regional variations, but we are still in a very competitive position. Where you live is just one of a number of factors. Others, like smok-



Southern comfort: Susan Andrews at Bournemouth



Northern blight: Gillian Barton at her home in Hull

ing, will have a much bigger impact on the premium."

Over at Direct Line they take a similar view. "Yes, we do take location into account, along with a number of other factors," a spokesman said. "But the average difference between areas is only about 2.25 per cent."

Increasingly, insurers are taking more into account than whether or not you smoke, and they look at other factors designed to offer more precise premiums, says Direct Line. Well, yes. But I still don't see quite how living in Yorkshire

makes me a worse risk than my twin in Dorset, so I turned to the experts for help.

Nick Dumbreck is an actuary at Watson Wyatt and is on the Association of Consulting Actuaries life insurance committee. He said: "Yes, there have been statistics published by the Government Actuary, based on census information, that show regional variations in mortality."

According to figures from the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, female and male mortality in Scotland is 111 per cent of the UK average. In the North West, male mortality is 106 per cent of the UK average, while female mortality is 108 per cent of the average. However, Mr Dumbreck added: "You cannot go on from that and say that everyone in Yorkshire is likely to die earlier than everyone in Dorset. It all depends on different factors."

"You have to answer a lot of questions when you apply for insurance over the telephone. These explicitly take into account your health and lifestyle. The big question is to what extent is where you live relevant on top of those factors?"

Telephone insurers can be very competitive — even

though you may have to be under 40 and lead a quiet, healthy life down South to qualify for the cheapest premiums. The rest of us need to shop around.

This week GA Life cut its term insurance rates by up to 16 per cent. Its premiums now look particularly good value if you're the wrong side of 40 and want £100,000 or more of cover. GA Life discriminates between smokers and non-smokers, but not on the grounds of where you live. The company would charge me £16.60 for my insurance.

Anyone looking for life insurance should seek a quote from Equitable Life. The company does not pay commission, so it does not usually get a mention if you're buying from a financial adviser. Equitable Life does not care where you live — it does not even charge more if you smoke. So perhaps not surprisingly it was the most successful life insurer in terms of new regular UK premiums last year. My insurance at Equitable would cost £15.10.

Nigel Webb at Equitable Life says that more than 95 per cent of its term insurance is sold at standard rates. Only a

small proportion of applicants have to pay more because of health or other problems.

Virgin Direct says that only 25 to 30 per cent of its quotes are at the standard rate. Everyone else has to pay more. So if you live north of Watford, still have not given up the dreaded weed, enjoy a drink or two and play rugby or go diving, watch out — all those factors can send your premiums soaring.

Paul Cooper, chief underwriter with M&G Re, pointed out that rates for individuals are often set according to the experiences of those on group schemes.

"Groups of blue-collar workers are more likely to smoke and have a worse diet than white-collar workers. They might see some marginal differences because of area."

"However, under these circumstances, there would appear to be an element of double counting. It would seem to be a somewhat specious argument."

Swiss Re is also puzzled about why people in the north should be deemed to be a worse risk. A spokeswoman said: "Other factors such as family history, and smoking should be taken into account."



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مكتبة من الأصل

Caroline Merrell on how our top clubs have scored in big business

Football's no longer a funny old game

Football fans may soon replace the victory chant "we're on our way to Wembley" with "we're on the way to the bank".

With multimillion-pound transfer deals becoming more common, the growth of pay-per-view TV for certain events, and merchandising, football looks poised to become a major industry.

Rumours this week that Manchester United, one of the seven clubs floated on the stock market or AIM, was a takeover candidate, pushed up its shares 32 per cent to nearly £6 a share.

The news also broke this week that Newcastle United, top of the Premiership, is lining up a £200 million float.

The speculation about Manchester had a greater effect on the share price than would normally be the case. The fact that the majority of the shares in football clubs are held by the fans and the directors means that the stock is illiquid and speculation has a greater effect on the price.

Manchester United was quick to play down the bid rumours, but a punter who bought shares in the club when it came to the market five years ago at 77 pence a share would be looking at an increase of more than 300 per cent on the investment.

Such is the interest in football that Nick Knight, securities specialist at the Japanese banking giant Nomura, has put together an index of traded football clubs — the NRI UK football index. Over the last year, the index has more than doubled in value — growth that far outstrips the rise in the stock market, which itself has had a record run.

The other floated clubs include Millwall, Leeds United, through its parent company Caspian; Preston North End; Chelsea, through Chelsea Village; Tottenham Hotspur and Celtic. The total market capitalisation of the sector is around the £700 million mark. All, with the exception of Leeds, are showing a healthy return.

Shares in Chelsea Village, which was brought to the market in April of this year have risen more than 50 per cent, while shares in Celtic, floated around a year ago, have more than trebled in value.

Mr Knight believes that the sector could grow to be worth more than £1 billion over the next few years as clubs like Rangers, Sunderland, Leicester and Nottingham

Forest are also believed to be preparing to float.

Anyone, football fan or otherwise, should regard football club shares as a high-risk investment. On the whole, share prices will be linked to the performance of the players on the field.

For example, if a club looks poised to win a major domestic competition and entrance in to European competition — a lucrative money spinner for most clubs — then the share price will rise. However, if the club goes through a bad patch, losing matches, managers or gets involved in a financial scandal, then the share price will fall dramatically.

The link between the team's performance and the share price is less marked for clubs which derive more income from other sources. For example, Chelsea Village, gets some of its income from leisure and sports clubs.

Nomura believes that income from broadcasting and pay-per-view TV will in the future become more important to the financial fortunes of the clubs. In 1992 BSkyB contributed £300 million to the revenue of the top clubs. These television contracts have recently been renewed for £670 million.

Pay-per-view is also likely to improve the top clubs' fortunes. Chelsea claimed: "The new TV deal concluded by the Premier League should increase our TV income over the next four years, although this will be tempered by the increased player costs. The advent of digital or pay-per-view television should have a material effect on revenues."

Nomura said: "Even the most crude back-of-the-envelope calculations suggest that the upside is substantial and a long way from being recognised in the current share prices."



Newcastle's David Ginola is one of an ever-increasing number of big-money imports

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Norwich Union	BAA
Sun Alliance	A+AB

Two Cs and a B or below

Asa Equity & Law	C-C-C
Colonial	CBC
Sun Life	CCB

Based on £100 per month personal pension for man aged 30 next birthday using PIA projection rules.

Past performance

Two As and a B or above	AA+AA
Equitable Life	AA+AA
Royal London	BAA
Westminster Assurance	AAB

Two Cs and a B or below

Boissancie Life	CCC
Legal & General	BCC
NPI	BCC
Royal Insurance	CCC
Sun Alliance	CCC

Based on £30 per month personal pension or a226 plan taken out six months before 30th birthday.
Source: KPMG

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The Office of Fair Trading recently recommended a method by which financial plans, such as personal pensions, can be rated. That system of rating was used by consultants KPMG to assess the charges of various companies' personal pension plans and the results as published in Money Marketing May 1996.

The Equitable's with-profits Personal Pension Plan was the only one to be given the highest possible rating of A+A+A+ for its low charging plan.

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The same Office of Fair Trading rating system was applied by KPMG to the past performance of different companies' with-profits plans. Again The Equitable scored highly with an A+AA rating.

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*Source: Money Management, October 1996

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Adam Jones looks at ways to defuse the demographic time bomb

Britain prepares to follow foreign policy

Britain is increasingly looking overseas for the way it will provide for its ageing population in retirement, with Latin America being held up as a model for pension provision.

Our system needs to be overhauled. There simply isn't enough money to maintain the traditional state pension in the long term — part of the demographic time bomb facing Western nations.

And so Britain, a country used to having its ideas about government copied overseas, is set to become an importer of foreign practices. Australia, Singapore, Zimbabwe are among those being studied. But what might be introduced? The most high-profile reconnaissance mission was carried out by an all-party group of MPs which went to Chile and Argentina in the summer.

Chile has one of the most innovative schemes in the world. Employers deduct 10 per cent of the first £14,000 of a worker's wage at source. This is deposited with a private pension fund administration company, which invests the money cautiously in stocks and bonds under the ultimate supervision of the Government.

The worker can deposit an extra 10 per cent; again, the sum is tax-free. He or she is given a passbook and a three-monthly statement to monitor deposits and the performance of the fund. If the worker thinks the money is not growing enough, he or she can switch to another fund administrator. Payments can be suspended, an attraction to women and those with irregular working patterns.

According to the founder of the scheme, José Piñera, the big attraction is that rewards are linked to the amount of effort put in, plus the freedom to determine when you retire and how you organise your working life. The disadvantages include high charges — an extra 2.9 per cent of a Chilean's salary is taken to cover the administration.

Frank Field, the Labour MP who chairs the committee of politicians which went to Latin America, says too few people — 60 per cent — are eligible for Chilean pensions. He prefers what they saw in Argentina, a hybrid of the Chilean "pay as you go" system and British state provision.

It allows groups of individuals to band together their contributions, as trade unions or other mutually aided organisations, yet promotes the idea of people being responsible for saving for their own pensions.

Outside Latin America, Asia has produced a few interesting possibilities. Singapore was discussed as a possible model for Britain earlier this year. Singaporeans save a phenomenal amount of money — they



have to, the Government forces them to put 20 per cent of their income into a central provident fund which provides for their pension, with a matching sum paid in by the company.

Singaporeans can borrow against this fund when they want to buy a house. But it is harder for a citizen to monitor how the money is being invested because reporting standards are not as rigorous as Britain's. Nor does Singapore have a bond market, points

as a nation saved low amounts in world terms, and the Government was keen to bolster this," says Harris, who is involved in the OFT inquiry into Britain's personal pension industry.

A new way of funding pensions was introduced in Australia, which did not guarantee a fixed income in retirement — like a government version of a personal pension scheme. A mandatory 3 per cent is deducted at source from

commode career breaks and family-raising.

Denmark is facing more trouble than most because of its extremely generous state provision. However, it has one strength. All complaints and queries about pensions are processed through one accessible ombudsman. Britain's complaints system, in comparison, is hopelessly fragmented and confusing.

The USA, which tends to minimise state involvement in welfare, provides a final example of good practice. In the 1970s it developed individual retirement accounts for workers not covered by occupational schemes. Tax-deductible contributions are made, up to an annual limit. The pooled money is managed by a government arm. The attractions are that contributions can be irregular — a boon to people with stop-and-go careers.

The contribution limits increase if you have a dependent partner, acknowledging, at least in a small way, the need to extend retirement planning to spouses. Contributors can also take out a loan to pay premiums when they are short of cash. Ingeniously, the interest on the loan is tax-deductible.

Singaporeans save a phenomenal amount of money - they have to

out David Harris, a Churchill research fellow from Australia, who has looked at pension provision around the world. This limits the domestic investments the provident fund can make, leaving it more dependent on equities.

Three other countries studied by Harris could have an influence on British pensions in the next century. Australia has tackled public apathy over retirement planning with a leaflet and public awareness campaign. "The Australians

an employee's salary, matched by 6 per cent from the employer. The personal contributions can be increased voluntarily. On retirement, the accumulated money can be used to buy an annuity.

Australia is also planning a retirement savings account, which will have long-term tax breaks, like an extended version of a Tessa.

Life insurance companies are also thought to be considering special pensions plans for women, designed to ac-

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TRUST WATCH

Kleinwort calls for patience

Kleinwort Benson is warning investors in its European Privatisation Trust not to sell their shares because they could lose money. The trust, which is in process of being broken up, has about 70,000 investors. They must vote before October 26 on whether they want cash for their holdings, or reinvest in one of three unit trusts.

If they choose to sell their shares before this, they will receive a dividend due at the end

of November. They will also get only 97.5p for their shares, against 100p, if they wait for the trust to be reorganised.

Many people have not yet returned their voting forms. Those who fail to vote will automatically have their shares transferred into the European Privatisation Trust. Investors can vote to take cash or roll investments over into M&G's European trust.

GUINNESS FLIGHT has unveiled a fund which aims to exploit the anticipated growth in Far East economies. In particular, the fund will con-

centrate on buying shares in smaller companies.

The Asian Smaller Companies Trust will hold around 70 stocks in companies with a market capitalisation of between US\$50 million and \$1 billion. Despite the proximity of the handover of Hong Kong back to the Chinese in 1997, the fund will be 43 per cent invested in Hong Kong companies.

Phillip Saunders, Guinness Flight director, said: "Clearly some people are negative about the handover, whereas we are in the positive camp. I personally believe that a lot

of people are concentrating too much on the politics and not looking at the economies of the region."

The fund will invest in companies that have subsidiaries in China rather than Chinese companies that are listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange.

The fund manager is pinning some of its hopes for the fund on the growth of retail sales in China. For example, it pointed out that the People's Bank of China anticipates that by the end of the century 200 million people in the country will hold credit cards.

It also claims that the country already has an estimated one million millionaires.

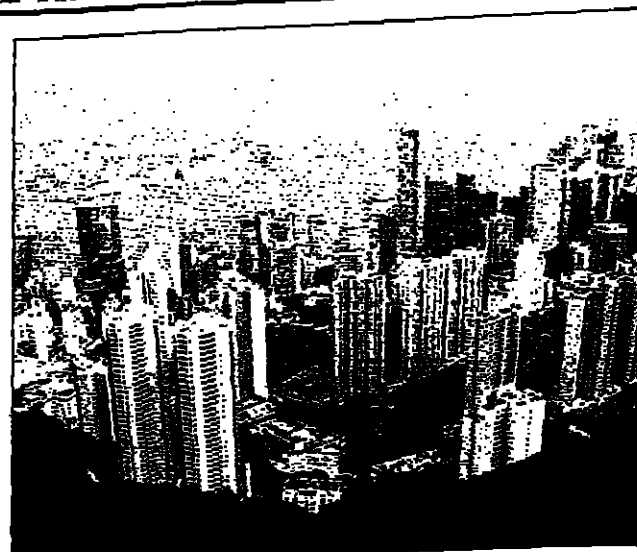
The fund will be managed by Nerissa Lee, the investment director of Guinness Flight Asia. It will have the same investment strategy as Guinness Flight's offshore Asian Smaller Companies Fund. This fund is currently ranked fifth in its sector of 142 offshore funds since launch in October 1995.

The other areas of the world in which the fund will invest include Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and

directly in China. Mr Saunders said the fund did not invest in Korea, one of favourites of the other Far East specialists, because the companies tended to be large conglomerates. He said: "The investment strategy will concentrate on consumer-related stocks, electronics companies, real estate and financial companies."

The fund has a minimum investment of £1,000, an initial charge of 5 per cent and an annual management fee of 1.5 per cent.

CAROLINE MERRELL



Hong Kong has a key role in Guinness Flight's new trust

Water can be good value despite droughts, says Matthew Wall

Slake your thirst for profits

SHAWN BURTON/DEVON & CORNWALL NEWS AGENCY



Reservoir dodge: water companies are investing up to £39 billion by 2005 and this could persuade a Labour government to let them off lightly

The water regulator's plans for an unscheduled price control review of the 29 water and sewerage companies in England and Wales in 1999 has further depressed an already gloomy sector. Ian Byatt, the regulator, wants efficiency savings to be passed on to customers. Bills are now a third higher in real terms than at privatisation. Unlucky customers of South West Water have seen their average water bill double in real terms to £124 and their average sewerage bill soar 72 per cent in real terms to £193 since 1989.

A regulatory crackdown and the prospect of a Labour government imposing a windfall tax of up to £5 billion on utilities generally has contributed to water stocks signifi-

cantly underperforming the rest of the market this year. But on closer inspection of the sector, which has a market capitalisation of £13 billion and turns over more than £8 billion, the market's pessimism presents good buying opportunities for investors.

Water shares yield 6.4 per cent on average — on a par with bonds and gilts. Significant dividend growth is still on the cards, in spite of the uncertain climate. United Utilities for example, which comprises North West Water and Norweb, is committed to an 11 per cent annual dividend rise, even after inflation, up to the year 2000. And Yorkshire Water is committed to a share buy-back that should enhance dividends.

Some analysts argue that a

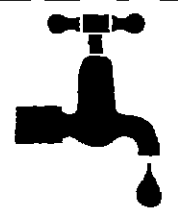
windfall tax is unlikely to be so punitive that it jeopardises Labour's hard-won image as a friend of the City. The water companies' investment programme totalling £39 billion up to 2005, prompted by several European directives stipulating water quality improvements, should also persuade a Labour government to treat the sector more lightly than electricity, despite the "fat cat" scandals and drought debate.

John Hatherley, head of research at M&G, the unit trust group, said: "The market has taken an unduly pessimistic view of utilities this year. That makes them good value." He likes Anglian Water for its good management in one of the UK's driest areas. It has also resisted a move into unrelated businesses, unlike

Thames Water, for example, which wrote off £95 million when it left contracting.

Another favourite is Severn Trent Water, so long as it does not pay too much for South West Water. Its prospective bid for SWW is still being investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, as is Wessex Water's intended bid for the same company. The sector has seen a flurry of takeover activity. Northumbrian Water was swallowed by Lyonnaise des Eaux. United Utilities, Hyder and Scottish Power formed multi-utilities, and Mid-Kent Water, the water supply company, is being pursued jointly by General Utilities and Saur, two French utilities.

But industry observers believe activity is likely to tail off



SECTOR
IN FOCUS

as the election approaches. Investors should not ignore the smaller water supply companies, such as East Surrey and South Staffordshire. They may not yield as much as big water and sewerage companies, but their lower investment needs give more freedom to lift dividends.

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Success of Tessa should defeat call for change, says Caroline Merrell

Safety in numbers



Leading ladies: Tessa has proved as big a star with the public as Nastassia Kinski in the title role in the film Tessa

The Building Societies Association is renewing its call for the Chancellor's next Budget to equalise the tax breaks enjoyed by tax-exempt special-savings accounts and personal equity plans.

It wants the Government to remove the special tax treatment from all existing investments. Instead, it suggests the introduction of a new personal allowance which can be set against all types of investment income. People would then be free to choose how much to invest in deposits, equities or fixed-interest securities.

However, the societies believe that it is unlikely that the Chancellor will make any real change to the rules governing Tessa.

The Tessa, introduced when interest rates were at their peak in 1991, has caught the imagination of the investing public. The number of accounts has climbed from 2,082,000 in March 1991 to 4,538,000 at the end of December 1995. The amount invested has mushroomed from £5 billion to £28 billion at the end of last year — £19 billion was invested through building societies, with the remaining £9 billion through banks.

However, Inland Revenue statistics show that the amount given away in tax breaks on the accounts is likely to fall from £450 million this year to £350 million next year because of the overall drop in interest rates.

Most financial advisers agree that if you have any sort of savings at all, you should consider opening a Tessa — providing you are not averse to keeping your savings locked up for five years.

The Revenue rules allow you to invest a total of £9,000 in a

Tessa. If you have had a Tessa before, you can reinvest £9,000 in a follow-on Tessa. If you have not had a Tessa, you can invest £3,000 in the first year, followed by up to £1,800 in each of the next four years, or a total of £9,000 by the final year. You can withdraw an amount equivalent to the interest earned without the tax break.

The first decision to make when deciding which Tessa to take out is whether to opt for a fixed-rate account or a variable-rate account. Which to go for depends on your view about the direction of interest rates.

At the beginning of this year, when the huge amount of original Tessa money came to maturity, the best fixed rates were about 7 to 7.5 per cent, as were the best variable rate accounts. Since then, the interest rates for variable-rate Tessa have dropped slightly.

For example, the Nationwide Building Society cut the variable rate on both its products on September 1 after the base

rate cut earlier in the year — rates dropped by 0.35 per cent to 6.15 per cent. The Nationwide Tessa does include a maturity bonus of 2 per cent.

According to *Moneyfacts*, the best fixed-rate accounts for those saving in a Tessa for the first time include accounts from Natwest Bank, Yorkshire Building Society, Sun Bank Corporation, Bank of Ireland and Birmingham Midshires. For example, those saving the full £9,000 in a Natwest Tessa will be guaranteed £12,895 on maturity.

Moneyfacts says that the best variable-rate Tessa, apart from those mentioned in the table, are offered by the Marsden, Principality, Tipton & Coseley, Market Harborough and First Direct. As well as considering whether to opt for a fixed or variable-rate account, potential Tessa savers should look at the exact structure of the interest rate payments. Many offer tiered rates and bonuses

on maturity. It is also important to note any penalties which could be applied should you want to switch your account.

As can be seen from the Best Buys table, bigger is not always better when it comes to finding the right account. Some of the smaller building societies will offer some of the better rates.

A *Which?* analysis of maturing Tessa carried out at the beginning of the year showed that the building societies on average offered better rates than the banks, and that there was a difference in maturity values of £3,500 between the best and worst performers.

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Allied Trust Bank 0171 620 0879	£9,000	7.00%	2 months notice, +£25 fee
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	£5,000	7.45%*	180-day loss of interest
West Bromwich 0121 807 2415	£3,000	7.45%*	28-day notice, 180 day loss of interest
First Tessa's			
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	£5,000	7.45%*	180 day loss of interest
Yorkshire BS 0800 378836	£9,000	7.30%*	Up to 180 day loss of interest
Birmingham Mid 0845 720721	£1,000	7.00%	180 day loss of interest

*Fixed Rate. All other rates variable. A lower rate of interest may be paid on feeder accounts. *Feeder account also pays 7.00%. *Fixed CAR rate, interest paid quarterly. No further additions. *Further additions not permitted. *Fixed CAR rate, interest paid quarterly. Feeder also pays 7.45 per cent. No further additions. *Transfers not accepted. Feeder account also pays 7.20%. All rates quoted before tax. Source: *Moneyfacts*

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(evening)



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For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £40, leaving a net of £60.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £50, leaving a net of £50.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £60, leaving a net of £40.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £70, leaving a net of £30.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £80, leaving a net of £20.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £90, leaving a net of £10.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £100, leaving a net of £0.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £110, leaving a net of £10.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £120, leaving a net of £20.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £130, leaving a net of £30.

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For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £150, leaving a net of £50.

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For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £210, leaving a net of £110.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £220, leaving a net of £120.

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For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £780, leaving a net of £680.

For a High Income Taxpayer (HIT) the credit is £790, leaving a net of £690.

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Sarah Jones warns those tempted to buy gold coins as Christmas presents

Golden daze from gold fever

If you are tempted to buy a few gold coins, do not let the romance and nostalgia of it all blind you to the real risk you are taking. Gold coins are made of gold – an extremely volatile market.

While many may buy a sovereign or two to put away for their grandchildren, any investment strategy should be more short-term since the price of coins is largely influenced by the price of gold, which has fallen 44 per cent over the past 16 years.

"You think of shares rising steadily over a long-term period, but gold is not consistent like that. It is wise to track the market and if you see a rise take advantage of it," said Nigel Tooley, director of bullion at Spink, the coin dealer.

"In January this year, gold was about £248 an ounce, in February £275. So if you had bought and sold

within that month you would have seen a good profit. But over the long term the pattern is not so encouraging. In the boom of 1980 gold was £377 an ounce, today it is at an all time low for this year of £241, so obviously you would make a substantial loss if you sold now. However, it may be a good time to buy, though you cannot tell how low the price can go."

Coin prices change from day to day. To check you are getting a fair price, ask two or three dealers for their price that day. Dealers' commission, whether buying or selling, is built into the price. Certain coins sell at a small premium over their gold content, such as Kruggerands and modern sovereigns, and are referred to as "bullion coins". So, for example, the gold in a sovereign is currently just under £57 but it will

cost £61 to buy, giving the dealer a £4 profit. The selling price for a sovereign, currently at £55, is based purely on the price of gold. Prices will vary according to the number of coins you are buying or selling.

Sovereigns and the South African Kruggerands are the most commonly traded coins. Other coins, such as the Britannia, the Canadian Maple Leaf and the Chinese Panda, which are harder to come by, will have a higher premium.

New rules on VAT from early last year mean that you should be able to buy a second-hand gold coin without paying VAT, with the dealer paying VAT on the dealer's overall sales margin. You normally have to pay 17.5 per cent VAT on the whole cost of a new coin. The dealer margin scheme for

second-hand coins is optional so always check that the price you are quoted includes any VAT and that you are not paying VAT on the whole price. The price of a sovereign could vary between £61 including VAT on the dealer's margin and £71.68 with full VAT.

It is advisable to use a dealer registered with the British Numismatic Traders Association, and to avoid schemes which purport to invest in a portfolio of rare coins on your behalf. The chairman of one such company, Rare Coin Investment, was recently jailed for six years for defrauding clients. Coins as an investment are not covered by the Financial Services Act, so investors cannot claim under the Investors Compensation Scheme.

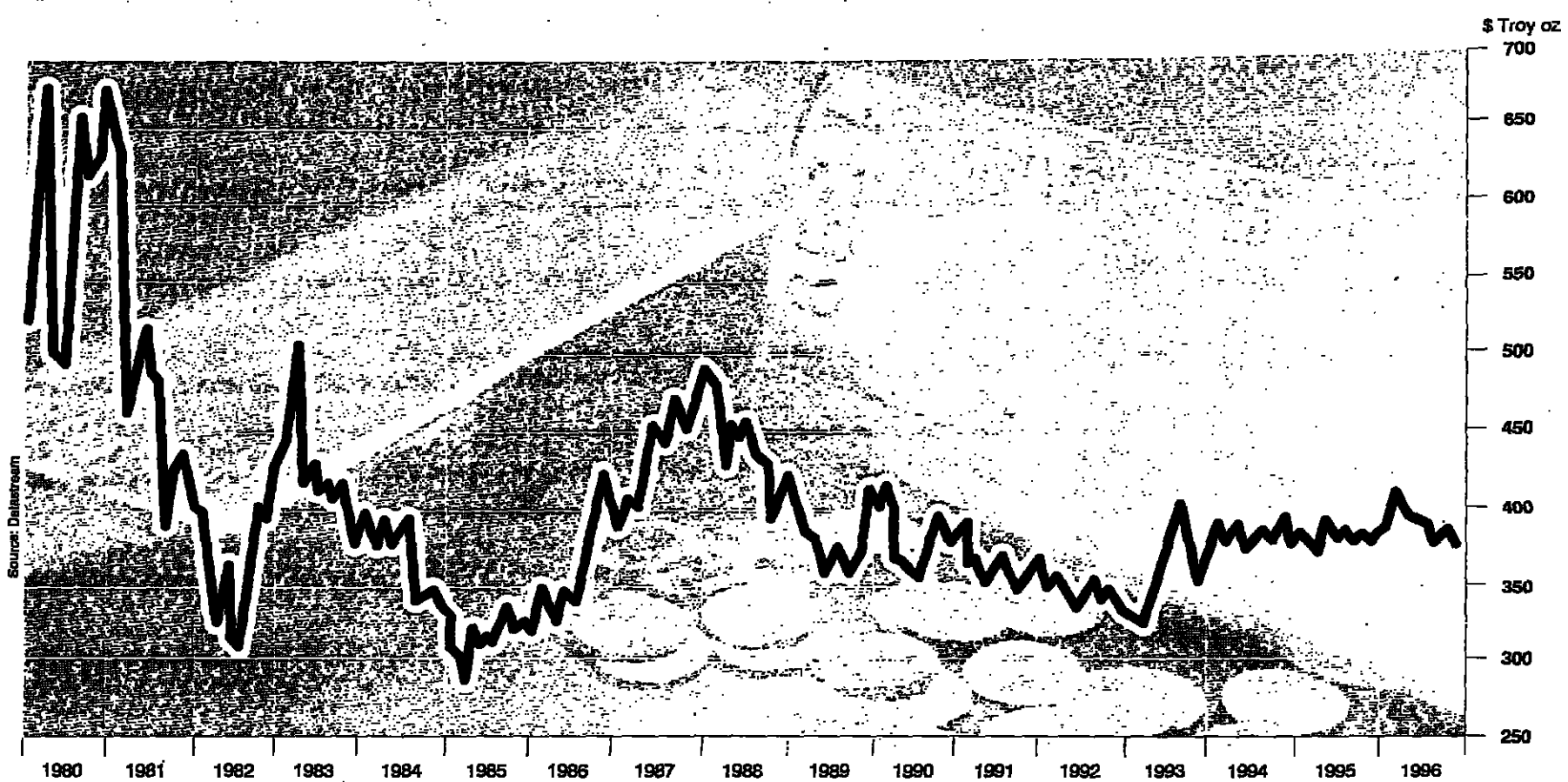
For a list of coin dealers, many of whom trade by mail order, send an

SAE to the British Numismatic Traders Association, PO Box 474, Thames Ditton, Surrey KT7 0WJ. The trade press carries details of forthcoming coin fairs.

Gains you make on the sale of coins are liable to capital gains tax. If the coins are a gift to a child, any gains will come under his or her own CGT allowance, as long as the coins are actually handed over to the child.

"Most people buy coins as presents," said Stephen Fenton, of Knightsbridge Coins and chairman of the BNTA. "I couldn't recommend coins as a great investment since it all depends entirely on the price of gold. When I started 30 years ago a sovereign cost £4. In 1980 it was up to £100 and since then has fluctuated around £45-£60. But who can tell what will happen to gold over the next few years?"

HOW THE PRICE OF GOLD BULLION HAS FALLEN OVER THE PAST 16 YEARS



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Customers looking for more than a standard service from their bank account will welcome Barclays Additions. The latest addition to the world of personal banking, Barclays Additions, is now available to customers nationwide.

Providing services well beyond the scope of a traditional current account, Barclays Additions was created after extensive research into what customers want.

Barclays Additions offers a broad range of value added benefits, suitable for many types of people, particularly couples facing the rising cost of bringing up children.

The extra services provided by Barclays Additions include a £100 overdraft, purchase protection for most items over £50 bought with a Barclays Connect card, a Will Writing Service, life assurance and discounted healthcare cover for children. The account provides a complete financial package of benefits for a monthly fee of just £5. For a typical couple with two children this adds up to a potential saving of £240 in a year.

Customers successfully applying for Barclays Additions benefit from a £100 overdraft, with no usage fees or interest and an automatic authorised overdraft, with no monthly usage fees. The personal overdraft limit agreed by Barclays could be up to £5,000, depending on individual circumstances.

Access to Barclaycall telephone banking provides a host of services 365 days a year – for example customers can check their balance, transfer money between accounts or pay bills at times that suit them. A Barclays Connect card with £100 cheque guarantee facility is also provided. These services are designed to help make money management easy and convenient.

For customers who shop with a debit card, another account benefit is purchase protection for most Barclays Connect purchases between £50 and £15,000. Items bought with Barclays Connect are protected against loss, theft or accidental damage for 100 days from the date of purchase, provided they are not covered by any other insurance. Barclays Cardholder Protection is also included with Barclays

AN ACCOUNT FAMILIES CAN BANK ON



The new Barclays Additions account gives you more control, convenience and security

Additions, so a single free phone call is all that is needed to cancel lost or stolen cards. All debit and credit cards belonging to the account holder and their partner are covered, even if they don't have a joint account.

Barclays Additions also features a Will Writing Service which could benefit many customers. A recent NOP survey of 1,000

adults revealed that 75% of people who have children said they do not have a Will. Customers automatically receive £5,000 of life assurance cover and no declarations or medical examinations are required (death from natural causes within the first six months of opening the account is not covered). The cover is valid for account

holders under 60 and for a joint account both partners have £5,000 of cover each.

A legal helpline provides customers with telephone access to solicitors and legal executives 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Typical calls answered by the service are about property disputes, insurance advice and employment issues.

Heavily discounted healthcare cover for children is also exclusively available with Barclays Additions. Families who open a Barclays Additions account can capitalise on this extra benefit at just £2.50, per child, per month. This cover provides access to Key Plan for Youth from PPF healthcare and is available exclusively for children of Barclays Additions account holders.

Barclays Additions is available alongside the Barclays Bank Account and offers ten additional benefits. It is likely to appeal to a broad range of customers and is of particular value to families as the benefits provide extra financial control, security and peace of mind.

Research by Barclays Bank revealed that more than one in three customers, regardless of their current bank, would like an account which offers more than the traditional service. Whilst Barclays remains committed to continuing to offer free day-to-day banking, Gordon Rankin, Director of Personal Banking, said "Barclays Additions is a current account with value-added services which are attractive to many customers. Take up levels in the pilot regions have been more than twice what we anticipated proving there is real demand for a current account of this kind. We expect to attract many new customers from other banks."

**Barclays
Additions**

More information about
Barclays Additions is available
through local branches of
Barclays Bank or by calling
freephone 0800 00 10 11

EASY SWITCHING TO BARCLAYS

To make opening an account at Barclays even easier, a new account transfer service has been introduced. Barclays handles the paper work, transferring across all direct debits and standing orders to the customer's new account. Customers will be kept informed at all stages about how things are progressing. All that is required from the customer is their signature and time to check the paper work.

Barclays is the first high street bank to introduce a transfer service which doesn't require the customer to fill in forms. This is in direct response to customer research.

CALLS OF CONVENIENCE

Barclaycall telephone banking, one of the features of Barclays Additions, could revolutionise the way many customers manage their money. Telephone banking is rapidly becoming one of the high street bank's most popular services.

With Barclaycall, customers can ring from early in the morning until late at night to access a range of banking services – including checking their balance, paying bills, changing standing orders and direct debits and transferring money from one account to another. For customers with a busy lifestyle Barclaycall could be the solution to many problems.

Barclaycall boasts a 98% satisfaction rate amongst its users and calls in the UK are charged at the local rate. Customers can continue to use the Barclays network of around 2,000 branches as well as Barclaycall.

PAYING IS PAINLESS WITH BARCLAYS CONNECT

The Barclays Connect card, issued with Barclays Additions, is a multi-function card providing the easiest possible way to pay. Barclays Connect is a debit card enabling customers to pay for goods and services wherever they see the VISA or DELTA signs. To pay, the customer hands over their card and the money is taken directly from their current account, no cheques to write, no monthly bill, just easy paying. But, for customers who still want to write a cheque, Barclays Connect carries a £100 cheque guarantee facility.

Customers can also use Barclays Connect to obtain money from cash machines in the UK and abroad by simply keying in their PIN number. By inserting their Barclays Connect card into any cash machine displaying the VISA sign the customer can withdraw up to £300 a day in local currency, or they can use it to pay in shops and restaurants. Barclays Connect can be used in over 250,000 cash machines worldwide and is accepted as payment in over 12 million outlets. Any transactions made whilst abroad or in the UK will appear on the customer's next current account statement.

*Barclays Additions and overdraft applications are subject to status. Customers must be 18 or over (20 in Jersey). Charges and interest rates may vary at the Bank's discretion. The monthly interest rate is 1.45% (18.6% EAR) for authorised overdrafts, 2.00% (24.8% EAR) for unauthorised overdrafts and accounts over any agreed limit. Unauthorised overdraft usage fees and all interest are charged to your account monthly. A month refers to a monthly charging period and not calendar months. Any payment causing an excess over your cleared balance on your account. You will be given at least 14 days' advance notice on your statement of any overdraft usage fees and any interest to be debited to your account. Overdrafts are repayable on demand. A current statement is available from your local branch of Barclays Bank PLC or from Barclays Bank PLC, Personal Services, PO Box 120, Coventry, CV4 6JN. However, your financial circumstances will be assessed. And remember if you should run into difficulties, please contact us immediately.
EAR = Equivalent Annual Rate.

ENJOY ALL THESE BENEFITS

- £100 overdraft - with no interest or usage charges
- Automatic authorised overdrafts without a usage fee. Interest will be charged only on the amount over £100 overdrawn*
- Purchase protection for most Barclays Connect debit card purchases over £50
- Will Writing Service
- Automatic £5,000 life assurance cover, £5,000 each for joint account holders
- Barclays Cardholder Protection
- Healthcare cover for children under 21, exclusive to Barclays Additions at a specially discounted rate of £2.50, per child, per month
- 24 hour legal helpline
- Barclays Connect card with £100 cheque guarantee facility
- Barclaycall telephone banking
- Customers who accidentally exceed their agreed overdraft limit: for up to two working days a month will not be charged an unauthorised overdraft fee, only interest is payable*



PROVIDING VALUE FOR MONEY

Customers taking full advantage of the benefits offered by a Barclays Additions account can make a realistic saving of £240 in a year.

CASE STUDY
Barclays Additions is chosen by a couple in their early 30s with two young children. They have an agreed overdraft on their joint account because they regularly overdraw at the end of the month before their salaries are paid in. If they took advantage of the added value features from Barclays Additions, their potential saving in a year could be:

Authorised overdraft usage fees with a Barclays Bank Account	£60
Interest on overdrafts up to £100	£3
Healthcare cover for two children	£108
Mirror Will which reflects the wishes of both husband and wife	£94

Estimated saving on life assurance for both	£22
Joint Cardholder Protection	£13
Total Potential Saving	£300
£5 monthly fee for Barclays Additions -	£60
Potential saving in a year	£240

Using the helpline could save around £100 per hour in legal fees and there is also the added security of purchase protection on most Barclays Connect purchases over £50 which could save the cost of replacing items which are lost, stolen or accidentally damaged within 100 days.

- Customer with a Barclays Bank Account overdraws up to £100 for 5 days a month.
- No standard PMI policy is available for children but the market forecast value is £7 per child per month, therefore the potential saving is £4.50 per child.
- Usually subject to a minimum premium and age/health declarations. The estimated saving of £11 each per annum is based on an assumed market value for £5,000 of cover.

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Unconvinced about the benefit to members of Norwich Union flotation

From Mr B.G. Rees
Sir, I have just received a copy of the minutes of the latest annual meeting of the Norwich Union, which I attended last May, travelling 300 miles to do so.

Having examined them carefully, I can find absolutely no mention of the specific objectives I, and others, raised against possible flotation in respect of the well-being of both members and staff.

Obviously the opinions of members such as myself were considered of little account and disposed of accordingly.

The group chief executive lays great store on vulnerability of the life fund to its general business interests, yet it can be no more at risk from that direction than from a stock market crash or poor investment performance.

Indeed, it is only three or four years since the life fund suffered enormous losses (several hundred million) on its disastrous property portfolio. Flotation will do absolutely nothing to reduce that kind of investment risk.

Expert commentators are already advising that post flotation, Norwich Union premium rates are likely to rise; and with future shareholders taking 10 per cent of the returns on the life fund, the prospect for younger current policyholders, and those of the future, are not attractive.

They could soon knock a hole in a £500 "inducement" to change — and financed from members' funds, anyhow! As a policyholder for well over 20 years, and with maturing policies in the offing, I may draw attractive payouts from demutualisation with little downside risk of poorer policy value in the future.

However, I like to believe that the advancement of self is not yet all-pervasive and I am just as concerned about the prospects for my son and others like him in their twenties, rather than those of us in our fifties.

The Norwich Union appears to be declaring the largest possible constituency to maximise the "yes" vote. Those with no variable investment content whatsoever in their policies and with guaranteed returns, will have a vote. They will invariably vote in favour, because it gives them an unexpected windfall not available in any other way.

The board announcements by Norwich Union have emphasised the future potential

benefits for members/shareholders.

Little has been heard of potential benefits for those recommending the changes — share handouts and options for directors and senior management, the remuneration policy for senior employees moving into the "private" sector and the fees to be paid to the merchant banks. Another pack of "fat cats" in the offing?

Let members have a declaration of any such matters which can be legitimately regarded as "vested interests"

of those recommending the change.

The returns on NU with-profit policies have fallen in recent years — way down the "league tables" on which they once laid great store. Maybe if the board had addressed this issue, it may have given members and the wider community far better returns than this grandiose scheme.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN REES,
20 Rectory Close,
Sarn Bridgend,
Mid Glamorgan.

Raw deal for the disabled

From Mr R. Ward
Sir, Actions to deny the disabled equal rights with able-bodied people continue to abound, and as Richard Brewster, chief executive of Scope, points out (Weekend Money Letters, October 5), even when the Government, through the Disability Discrimination Act, takes steps to put matters right, exemptions and qualifications allow and endorse the continued discrimination.

There is no worse example than that of the building societies, especially those planning to convert to banks. Because many disabled people do not have the ability to manage their own accounts, members of their family, friends or care workers operate their accounts for them. In many cases such accounts have been opened in the name of the helper who operates the account, with the disabled person's name being placed second.

However, societies say that, on conversion, bonus shares will only be given to the first named on an account. They then further tighten the screw by adding that where a person has two or more accounts in their name, only one account will qualify for bonus.

Play the disabled. First they will have to depend on the good nature of their helper to transfer the bonus shares obtained on their personal savings. Secondly, they have to hope that the helper does not also

have a personal account of his or her own at the same building society because if they do... well you can guess who will keep the shares.

This is so patently unjust that you would think that once the societies realised the situation they would take steps to remedy it. Instead, they hide behind claims that they are "bound by legislation" and "legally their hands are tied". This is untrue. According to Angela Knight, MP, Treasury Minister responsible for building societies, there is already legislation in place allowing bonus shares to be given to members "in particular circumstances".

The Halifax reassures us that "we are not trying to discriminate", but admits that its disabled clients will miss out on share allocations. The Alliance & Leicester, meanwhile, says "it is in the best interests of members not to alter the present system". Presumably they have the vote of their members to back that?

In the face of such humbug and cant, one might ask the chief executives of these societies — if they have any concern for their disabled investors — what legislation they would like to see enacted so they can pay bonus shares to them? Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND WARD,
25 Abbey Mill Lane,
St Albans,
Hertfordshire.

Commission ensures that independent financial advisers are 'salesmen' too

From Mr P. Sutton
Sir, In Weekend Money Guide 2, you say: "Salesmen who may also be known as... tied agents can advise on the investment schemes of only one company. An independent financial adviser is able to advise on the schemes of many companies."

This is true, but it does not ensure that the independent financial adviser will always advise impartially. Most inde-

pendent financial advisers are commission-based: they must sell to live, so they are just as much "salesmen" as is the tied agent.

The title "adviser" is, in this respect, misleading and the client is well advised to bear this in mind. Yours faithfully,
PETER SUTTON,
9 Fairview Drive,
Hythe,
Southampton.

Conversion share windfalls effectively prevent long-term borrowers from selling their property

From Mr H.N. Macdonald
Sir, Some months ago I asked the Halifax Building Society how I could remain qualified for the free shares to be distributed upon their conversion to a public company if I redeemed my 18-year-old mortgage. I was informed that I would need to retain a debit balance of at least £100.

With this in mind, I have just sold my flat, but on attempting to leave this mini-

mum balance outstanding, the Halifax insisted that they would have to retain possession of the deeds of the property!

Particularly in view of the inexplicably long run up to conversion the Halifax should allow long-term borrowing members who redeem mortgages on the sale of their property during this period to simply maintain an unsecured loan of £100, or at least to secure this relatively insignifi-

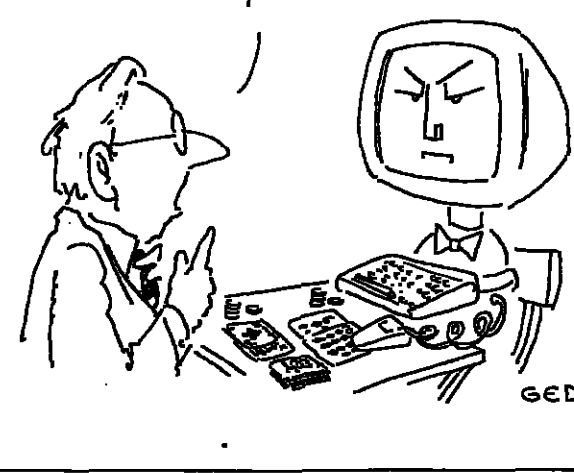
cant sum in some other less punitive way. It seems quite unreasonable for such borrowers to be effectively barred from their property and redeeming the mortgage on penalty of losing their share distribution. Yours faithfully,
HENRY MACDONALD,
Isla Cristina 14-3c,
28035 Madrid,
Spain.

Calculation too complicated for savers

From Mr S.J. Gerrard
Sir, Why cannot all building societies show the annual interest paid each month with the rate applying at that time, instead of a one-line entry in the passbook for interest received over the whole year. It is extremely difficult for the average individual to calculate how

much interest he should have earned in a year, his whole interest entitlement over 12 months, as rates vary over the period. This would allay any suspicion lurking in investors' minds. Yours faithfully,
STANLEY GERRARD,
34 Ash Grove,
Perth.

I'd prefer my winnings now... rather than in the old annual report



Landlords fear losing the possession game

From Mr G. Cutting
Sir, There are still serious problems in the residential letting market, and it was timely that Sara McConnell should highlight them (Warning for new wave of landlords, Weekend Money, October 12). The risk/reward ratio is becoming steadily more adverse and the legislative framework positively encourages the defaulting tenant to play the possession game. Landlords

only seek possession for good reason but when, exceptionally, they do the process should be speedy and certain after the due notice, which is usually at least two months. Delays in possession encourages tenants to default and deters responsible landlords from letting. Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY CUTTING,
Chairman,
Small Landlords Association,
53 Wenter Road, SW15.

Woolwich insurance renewal is interest free

From Mr C. Crouch
Sir, I refer to a letter from Mrs J Lee (No excuse in the computer age for these charges, Weekend Money Letters, September 28). Where an insurance renewal is debited to a Woolwich mortgage account on September 29, interest is not charged on the outstanding premium for the following year. Although the premium for this renewal date is included in the balance at the mortgage

year-end, September 30, it does not form an integral part of the balance for the purpose of calculating interest for the following financial year. Interest would only become payable if the premium remained unpaid by the following year end. Yours faithfully,
CHARLES CROUCH,
Woolwich Building Society,
Corporate Headquarters,
Wading Street,
Bexleyheath, Kent.

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Full Name(s):

Address:

Postcode:

Signature(s):

Please note: We will send you an investment account opening form when acknowledging your cheque. Post to: Derbyshire Building Society, Freeport, Duffield Hall, Duffield, Derby, DE56 9BR. (NB Freeport may take up to 3 working days. For a faster delivery you may wish to use first class post.)

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General Accident

EXCITING RETURNS

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Positive end to the week

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

BANKS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Barclays	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	HSBC	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Midland	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	NatWest	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Paragon	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
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100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

ELECTRICITY

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
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100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

HEALTHCARE

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

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100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
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100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

CHEMICALS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
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100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Heineken	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

DISTRIBUTORS

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Carlsberg	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
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100	98	Stout	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0

CHEMICALS

100	98	Adnams	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Beck's	47.50	+0.50	5.2	12.0
100	98	Br Aerospac	116 3/4	+ 2 1/2	15	24.3
101	767	Br Steel	181	- 2 1/2	6.9	4.9
101	11 1/2	Brook Tost	14 1/2	-	2.5	10.9
103	38	Brunel	30 1/2	-	2.0	11.6
103	70 1/2	Bullough	71 1/2	-	9.6	-
105	92	Burnham	116 1/2	-	3.5	17.5
105	225	Carls Exp	266 1/2	-	5.0	13.1
107	171	Coolings	235 1/2	-	2.3	15.8
108	145	Coolings	145	-	6.5	9.5
108	140	Chambers Hm	143	-	4.0	13.4

THE TIMES SATURDAY OCTOBER 19 1996

هكذا في الأصل

BOXING: FAMILIAR CABARET ROLLS INTO CAIRO WHILE UNHERALDED BRITON BIDS FOR WORLD TITLE IN AMERICAN'S BACK YARD

Eubank challenges the sands of time

Holmes poses tall order for Woodhall

FROM ANDREW LONGMORE
IN CAIRO

WHATEVER his fate on his return to the ring against Luis Barrera in the Cairo indoor stadium tonight, Chris Eubank has lost none of his gift for understatement during his recent sabbatical. The slogan reads: "The Lord of the Manor presents Style on the Nile." Eubank and the Sphinx. Appropriate enough, many would say. Two statues for the price of one.

The weigh-in yesterday showed that Eubank's physique has not suffered from his time away, or from his natural graduation from super-middleweight to light-heavyweight. For all the Argentinian's journeyman status, this is a serious bout for Eubank and his regime has been surprisingly spartan. He has run along the banks of the Nile each morning at first light, accompanied by a posse of armed guards and a gaggle of small boys and has sparred more than 100 rounds in preparation for the bout against a fighter well past his prime. The gold-topped cane is still part of the show, but the inclusion of his hairdresser in the entourage is the one step to vanity.

If the personalised postcard entitled "Transcendentalism ultimately means non-conforming", given away free with every "Style on the Nile" T-shirt, is any indication, Eubank's mind seems to have gone up a weight, too. In between cruising round Brighton in his customised pick-up and losing on points to Mrs Merton in his last televised appearance, Eubank has clearly been doing some thinking, not all of it straight.

The riddle of the sands still remains. Why is the self-styled smart fighter, the man who not only beat 43 of his 47 opponents but the whole stinking system, infringing an age-old adage as old as the Pharaohs? Smart fighters never come back, not even at the relatively tender age of 30.

Depending on who you listen to, the answer lies in the empty lining of Eubank's wallet or the bulging recesses of his imagination. Eubank earned enough from boxing to keep his wife, Karen, and three (soon to be four) children in comfort, but not perhaps to keep himself in the designer-



Eubank, returning to the ring that he claimed to hate, prepares for his comeback, complete with suitable ceremony, against Barrera in Cairo

label manner to which he had become accustomed. Stories of his extravagance, of shopping sprees and flights on Concorde have fuelled speculation about the need to top up funds.

"I've made a lot of money out of boxing," he said. "If I lose money, I am not too worried. The object is much bigger than that. I want to bring boxing to the Middle East." And where better to start than by promoting the first professional show in the biggest city in Africa?

Eubank's grand plan is to set up a foundation to teach Cairo's street children how to box. Eubank intends to be one of the teachers. "It would be very much an honour. Here I have been honoured in a way I

never have been at home," he said. Ah, rejection. Eubank feels neither his achievements, which range from a record 19 successive defences of his World Boxing Organisation title to the construction of a 69-ft project for the homeless, nor his lofty ambitions have been suitably acknowledged in England, where, he says, the press like their boxers to be seen and, barring a few monosyllables, not heard. Cairo might still be learning about Eubank, but at least it will judge him for what he is.

In a city where everything has a price, the extent of the people's admiration of their strange new guest will be gauged by the size of the crowd. The capacity of the indoor stadium is about 20,000 and, according to the organisers, 18,000 tickets have already been sold.

Eubank's phrase. The cheapest advertised seats cost £15. 15 times more than entry to the main football stadium up the road. The most expensive £750. Eubank has promised a grand entrance, on a camel or a

panther, rumour has it, but wisely, the undercard includes three finals of the Egyptian amateur national championships, which might be more enticing to the locals than Eubank himself. One of the sponsors of the bout, Al-Ahram, the state-run newspaper, has been the main organ of publicity, along with national television, but the lack of support from international broadcasters reflects Eubank's diminishing drawing power and makes this venture as risky as a ride in a

Cairo taxi. The story that a Saudi princess started Eubank's interest in the Middle East adds to the mystery.

Ronnie Davies, Eubank's faithful trainer, believes that his man has discovered a plainer truth. "He is still a fighter and he wants that title back," he said. Eubank needs boxing more than boxing needs Eubank, in fact. "He missed it. You can't just be a champion and then give it all up, not when you've got so much more to offer. He needed a break, now he looks sharp, classy, with plenty of power." Too much, very probably, for his ageing opponent. By late tonight Barrera might very well be the one sculpted in stone.

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FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT
IN WASHINGTON

MICKEY DUFF has the knack of pulling off wins abroad against formidable champions, the most notable being Lloyd Honeyghan's sixth-round victory over Donald Curry in Atlantic City in 1985. Before that John Stracey had shown that beating champions in their back yards was possible when he stopped José Napoles, also in the sixth round of their contest, in Mexico City in 1975.

Tonight, another of Duff's boxers, Richie Woodhall, the Telford middleweight, takes on another world champion, Keith Holmes, at Upper Marlboro, Maryland, a short bus ride from Washington DC. Holmes is as highly-rated as Honeyghan and Stracey were in their time and Holmes does not have the kind of reputation that Napoles and Curry had, it should follow that Duff should be in for a good night - but since the saying "stars make fights" overrules all other logic in boxing, Duff remains only cautiously hopeful.

Although Woodhall's camp does not admit it, the main concern must be Holmes' southpaw stance. Woodhall is not happy against boxers who lead with their right. That was obvious when he defended his European championship nine months ago against Derek Wormald, who was not much more than an ageing journeyman. Wormald caused Woodhall problems for five rounds.

Woodhall's father and trainer, Len, brushes that performance aside, claiming that it should be seen as no more than an outing against a southpaw to gain experience for the bout with Quincy Taylor, who was the World Boxing Council (WBC) champion at the time and a southpaw. Len Woodhall said: "He decided that, if he had to learn about southpaws, he might as well do it here against Wormald. We knew he did not have the power to hurt Richie, so we let him come to us for five rounds. Then Richie took over and took him apart."

Holmes poses tall order for Woodhall

ing fighter. Since Holmes is tall and a boxer, Len Woodhall believes his son will be able to handle him better.

However, on Thursday, after the final press conference with Holmes, Woodhall, who is 5ft 7in tall, was alarmed to find that the WBC champion was not only taller than him but at least half an inch, but had a five-inch reach.

"He's a bit taller than I thought he was. I only discovered it when we had that eyeball-to-eyeball for the photographers," Woodhall said. "It's going to be difficult getting to him. He's got a reach of 77 inches, mine's 72. I don't think him being a southpaw will worry me, just his height."

It was lucky for Woodhall that he found out about Holmes' height and reach advantages before the bout and not during it. He has been able to make the necessary adjustments to his strategy, realising that he might not be able to get to Holmes first if he stays "outside", attempting to box him from a distance.

"I've definitely got to take the fight to him," Woodhall said. "I won't be hanging back [as he did against Wormald]. To beat him to the punch, I've got to get inside or he'll pick me off. He's a good fighter, but I think I can handle him."

Curiously, Woodhall has been encouraged to believe that he can beat Holmes as a result of an incident that happened here on Thursday, when he believes he was the victim of a prank designed to upset him. Instead of the official car taking him to a press conference 15 minutes from his hotel, Woodhall, his father and cornermen were given a ride, literally, that took them all round Washington and ended up at the White House, where the driver declared that he was totally lost.

The three were missing for two hours and Duff had begun to despair, believing that they had been held up by gunmen. "It shows they must be worried if they have to resort to a stupid stunt like that," Woodhall said. Stunt or not, it certainly had a positive effect on the challenger.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
 Arsenal v Coventry
 Arsenal Villa v Leeds
 Barnsley v Millers
 Middlesbrough v Tottenham
 Nottingham Forest v Derby
 Northampton v Blackburn
 Peterborough v Sunderland
 West Ham v Leicester

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
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3	9	6	2	1	18	6
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Blackburn v Tottenham
 Bolton v Barnsley
 Bristol Rovers v Bristol City
 Burnley v Bolton
 Cardiff City v Exeter
 Charlton v Reading
 Chester v Exeter
 Colchester v Norwich
 Crewe v Sheffield Utd
 Darlington v Mansfield
 Doncaster v Rotherham
 Hartlepool v Leyton Orient
 Hull v Fulham
 Ipswich v Reading
 Kidderminster v Port Vale
 Lincoln City v Notts
 Luton v Peterborough
 Mansfield v Rotherham
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RACING: SAEED BIN SUROOR TO PREVAIL IN TITLE DUEL

Halling has fitting stage to confirm champion status

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

THE struggle between Henry Cecil and Saeed bin Suroor for the trainers' championship reaches a fitting climax at Newmarket this afternoon when Bosra Sham and Halling clash in the best Dubai Champion Stakes for at least a decade.

After a season dominated by the head-to-head battle between the rival camps, the Godolphin trainer is 55,000 ahead of Cecil at the top of the trainers' table. If Halling can retain his unbeaten run on turf, stretching back more than two years, a first title for Sheikh Mohammed's man is assured.

However, victory for Bosra Sham, the brilliant 1,000 Guineas winner, would make Cecil a hot favourite to win his eleventh trainers' championship — and probably the one he would value most.

"It's a crunch time," Simon Crisford, the Godolphin racing manager, said yesterday. "We are thinking about the trainers' championship and

very much hope to achieve that goal."

While Halling and Bosra Sham deservedly head the betting, Even Top and Timarida would be worthy favourites in any other year. Even Top, tipped by Mark Of Esteem in the 2,000 Guineas, is arguably running over his

four-year-olds, and Timarida fits the bill. The John Oxtford-trained runner possesses a sparkling turn of foot and is still improving judged on her most recent success in the Irish Champion Stakes. However, her participation had been in doubt earlier this week because of coughing.

Bosra Sham's preparation has also suffered a hitch with a recurrence of bruising to a foot, which nearly stopped her running in the 1,000 Guineas. The Wafic Said-owned filly put up a fine performance behind Mark Of Esteem in the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot three weeks ago, after a four-month absence. She should be suited by today's extra quarter mile, and the heavy rain, which fell on the Rowley Mile yesterday, will be welcomed.

However, I cannot desert Halling, the best ten-furlong horse in the world on turf, who may be having his final race this afternoon before commencing a stud career.

Crisford was in a bullish mood when assessing Halling's chances. "He's in particularly good form and gives the impression he's as good as when he won at York. It will be fascinating to see how the race unfolds, but ours is such a versatile horse. He's won on fast and soft ground; he's done it coming from behind or making the running, and he has quickened off a fast and a slow pace."

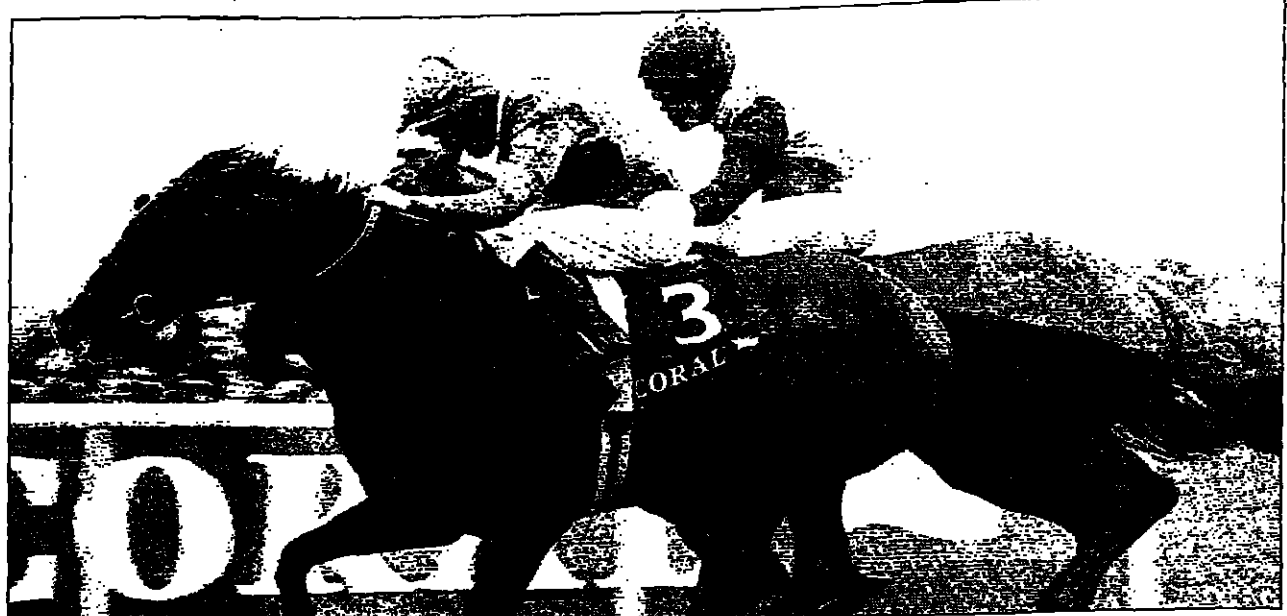
With the irrepressible Frankie Dettori in the saddle, Halling can prove himself one of the outstanding Champion Stakes winners.

Canon Can, who will have to run off a stone higher handicap mark in future, looks an ideal candidate for the Tote Cesarewitch (2,000). Henry Cecil's lightly weighted three-year-old has progressed significantly since being stepped up in trip and today's stamina-sapping test should prove ideal. Jiyush, Orchestra Stall and Trainglor look the main dangers.

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Halling, nearside, holds strong claims in the Dubai Champion Stakes at Newmarket this afternoon

Branston Abby for third course win

NEWMARKET CHANNEL 4
3.00: See left.
3.35: Bolshoi would have gone close to winning at Ascot last week with a trouble-free run. He looks sure to run well, but is unlikely to offer much value. Teaburrow has been poorly drawn on his two starts since finishing fourth in the Portland Handicap. He

now races off the same mark as when winning at the July course here and can bounce back to form. Sea-Deer shaped well at Haydock and looks a danger.
4.15: See left.
4.45: With Cyrano's Lad and Atrial likely to force the pace, this should be set up for Branston Abby to land her third win over course and

ROBERT WRIGHT

NEWMARKET

1.45 Artful Dane
2.20 Banting Timor
3.00 Jiyush (nap)
The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.00 CANON CAN.
Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.00 Jiyush, 4.15 HALLING (nap), 5.20 Trainglor Trends.

GOING: GOOD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE

2 Year
3 Year
4 Year
5 Year

1.45 ROTHMAN ROYALS NORTH SOUTH CHALLENGE SERIES FINAL

101 (4) 110110 CONKER UN 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
102 (5) 420000 BOND ON THE RUN 35 (2.0.5.5) (A. Dettori) 4-10-0... L Dettori 92
103 (15) 330151 REBEL COUNTY 13 (2.0.5.5) (S. Dettori) 4-10-0... S Dettori 92
104 (2) 010101 CATCH THE LIGHTS 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
105 (15) 202500 SANDHURST CHAMPION 20 (2.0.5.5) (S. Dettori) 4-10-0... S Dettori 92
106 (19) 122025 HAWKSWELL HILL 14 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
107 (11) 110101 SLEW 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
108 (4) 410001 MAPLE DAY 7 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
109 (29) 102111 HIGH PREMIER 7 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
110 (9) 120101 SLEW 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
111 (17) 302101 ROYAL CLOUTIER 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
112 (7) 500101 DANGEROUS 27 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
113 (10) 340101 FLYING NORTH 20 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
114 (12) 120101 SLEW 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
115 (11) 022101 EASY SET 28 (2.0.5.5) (M. Cecil) 4-10-0... T Quinn 92
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THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

ARSENAL
After only his second game in charge, this time against Coventry, Arsène Wenger, the manager, could find Arsenal top of the tree. But he knows there is work to be done on an ageing team, which cannot always rely on the inspired opportunism of Ian Wright to win the points. Now Wenger is there, Patrick Vieira, the France Under-21 cap, should continue to improve after an uneasy start. There is still a lack of craft and surprise in midfield, but the return of Adams has steadied the defence. **BG**

DERBY COUNTY
Not content with having a considerable say at the Baseball Ground, Igor Stimac is now trying to select the Nottingham Forest team as well. Stimac has urged Frank Clark, the Forest manager, to pick his fellow Croatian, Nikola Jerkan, when the sides meet this afternoon. Comradeship or ideology? Jerkan has had a difficult time since arriving in England, but Stimac said: "He is much better than Forest think. He must play if they are to perform well in defence." So there. **RH**

ASTON VILLA
Since Villa won three of their first four Premiership matches, and occupied second place in the table, little has gone right for Brian Little — seven games without a win, UEFA Cup ignominy, the acrimonious exit of Paul McGrath and the ill-timed Basil Fawley impression by Mark Bosnich. At least McGrath's departure, to Derby, was laced with a touch of humour. "Brian told me I would be rested at certain times during the season," he said, "but I didn't think I'd be rested before all the games started." **RK**

EVERTON
Everton have not lost to Liverpool since Joe Royle took over, but they go to Anfield tomorrow looking vulnerable. Dave Watson is back in the squad to help shore up the defence, but Everton's success against their more sophisticated neighbours has been built on their midfield players getting in among the Liverpool defence and putting themselves about. With Ebdell and Parkinson both doubtful, the "dogs of war" may be staying in their kennels. **PB**

BLACKBURN ROVERS
Ray Harford has subjected his side to the worst kind of torture. He made them sit through a 90-minute video of the Arsenal match — with the sound turned down. The much-hyped return of Graeme Le Saux to the first team has been put on ice again, for two weeks at least. Colin Hendry has set himself a similar target after a groin operation, but Kevin Gallacher and Ian Pearce are both ready for yet another return, followed no doubt by yet another injury. **DM**

LEEDS UNITED
George Graham, the manager, is taking comfort from seeing his side keeping a clean sheet or two, but last week, like several at Elland Road recently, revolved around the strikers. Graham suggested that Leeds may be rethinking their recall of Tomas Brodin in the light of Sampdoria's reported interest. Meanwhile, Brian Deane returned to training with the first team and Mark Hateley plays the last game of his spell on loan from Queens Park Rangers. **PB**

CHELSEA
Wimbledon always win at Chelsea: will they do so again? Last week, Gianluca Vialli was seen to walk away in the middle of Gullit's tactical talk at the training ground, did not start the game at Leicester, came on for the second half, scored one, made two and turned the tide. Practical psychology on the part of Gullit, or just good fortune? Chelsea will rely on Frank Leboeuf to counter Wimbledon's formidable aerial attack at set-pieces and the huge throw-ins of Vinnie Jones. **BG**

LEICESTER CITY
Despite an encouraging start, founded on sound organisation, Martin O'Neill, the manager, wonders how his side will cope when they lose key players through injury. He may find out at West Ham this afternoon, because two of his three central midfield players, Neil Lennon and Muzzy Izet, face fitness tests. Lennon, conspicuous with his ginger hair, has won much acclaim, but many of his passes are made for him by the intelligent running of Izet and Scott Taylor. **RH**

COVENTRY CITY
Amid all the doom and gloom at Highfield Road, the form of John Salako has shone like a beacon. So much so that many of his team-mates reckon he is not far away from adding to his five England caps. Salako, born in Nigeria, is also proving a dab hand at media relations. He made his debut on *Goals Extra* on Central Television recently and, apparently, disproved the general theory that most professional footballers are only able to let their boots do the talking. **RK**

LIVERPOOL
The team returned from Switzerland victorious, but fired — thanks to the press. Two tabloid reporters managed to loid reporters managed to wake the players at 3am on Thursday when two "friends" they had met in a nightclub started blaring their car horn outside the team hotel. Worse, the Liverpool flight home was delayed because the driver of the press coach got lost on his way to the match tomorrow. Fowler should recover to leave the team unchanged. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED
There will be a surprise figure on the Manchester United coach travelling to Newcastle today for tomorrow's match — Roy Keane. "He won't be involved in the game," Alex Ferguson said, "but I want him to come with us so I can see his progress in training." Keane is expected to return against Swindon on Wednesday, when Scholes and McClair will also be involved. So might Philip Neville, who may be on the bench tomorrow, but if Ryan Giggs is fit he will step straight in at St James' Park. **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH
Bryan Robson, the manager, admits to having been perplexed by Steve Vickers's sudden slump in form until he learnt that the central defender had been suffering from shingles but keeping the illness a secret. Now germ-free, Vickers is fit to face Tottenham today. Having seen his side concede eight goals in three games, Robson hopes for an improvement against a side that highlighted Middlesbrough's lack of wit when winning 1-0 in the equivalent fixture last season. **LT**

NEWCASTLE UNITED
It is nearly two seasons since Newcastle last experienced a no-score draw, and it seems that that trend will continue. Kevin Keegan, the manager, admitted this week that his side "don't have the first idea what a defensive strategy is". Against Ferencváros, it seemed they didn't even know what a defence was, and Keegan will take steps to put that right. Pavel Srnicek could be replaced by Shaka Hislop, and either John Beresford or Philippe Albert will make way for Robbie Elliott. **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST
Flies with an ear for gossip will settle on the walls of the shareholders' room this afternoon as the 209 men and women who each own a £1 share discuss, informally, plans to sell off the club. One of them, John Ellwood, has promised to begin a campaign to scupper any deal. Infighting is nothing new at the City Ground, though Frank Clark, the manager, insists the uncertainty is no excuse for a run of eight games without a win. Perhaps the BBC cameras will inspire his side today. **RH**

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY
A few short weeks ago, Wednesday were table-toppers. Now the game against Blackburn has all the look of a relegation battle, after seven games without a win. At least David Pleat, the manager, can call upon Benito Carbone, who finally received international clearance just an hour before yesterday's deadline for this match. He will replace Guy Whittingham, and Des Walker returns in defence, but David Hirst keeps his place, even though he has yet to score this season. **DM**

SUNDERLAND
Martin Scott has been one of Sunderland's unsung heroes this season and the left back returns from suspension for the trip to Southampton today. Further forward, Niall Quinn is again sidelined by injury. Jerome Gnako, the former France international, is available after a dispute with Sochaux, the French second-division side. The former AS Monaco player, now 28, has, according to Reid: "Two good feet." The only problem is he has not trained for three months. **LT**

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pls	Goal	Last five
			diff	liges
1 Newcastle	9	21	+5	WWWWW
2 Arsenal	9	20	+11	DWWWWW
3 Liverpool	9	20	+11	WWWWW
4 Manchester Utd	9	19	+13	WWWWW
5 Wimbledon	9	18	+7	WWWWW
6 Chelsea	9	16	+3	WWLWD
7 Sheffield Wed	9	13	-2	LLDLL
8 Middlesbrough	9	12	+1	WWLWD
9 Aston Villa	9	12	+1	DDDLL
10 Everton	9	12	-1	LLDWW
11 Tottenham	9	11	-1	LLWLL
12 Leicester	9	11	-5	LLWLL
13 Sunderland	9	10	0	LLWLD
14 Derby	9	10	-3	WWOLL
15 Leeds	9	10	-5	LLWLL
16 West Ham	9	8	-6	LLWLL
17 Nottm Forest	9	7	-7	LLDLL
18 Southampton	9	6	-2	LLWLD
19 Coventry	9	6	-10	LLWLD
20 Blackburn	9	3	-8	LLDLL

WEST HAM UNITED
They have won plenty of friends but, with four points out of 18, West Ham need to win a few matches, and with three home games in seven days, starting with Leicester City today, now is the time. "It is a big week for us," Harry Redknapp admitted. "We have been unlucky, but we cannot keep saying that. We need some victories." And some better news from the treatment room. Richard Hall, yet to make his debut, now faces an operation on his foot, and Futre is still out. **KP**

WIMBLEDON
After disagreements among Irish journalists this week about a possible move to Dublin, Wimbledon contemplate the shorter journey to Stamford Bridge, where a 2-1 victory last season ended a run of 14 games without a win — how times change. Brian McAllister, the defender, was relieved when X-rays revealed no break in the leg he injured last week, but will probably be missing today. Vinnie Jones, the new role model for the young pros, will hope to complete 90 minutes this time. **NS**

SOUTHAMPTON
The days when Southampton fielded nothing more exotic than the odd Channel Islander are long gone. After Lukdevant, Ostendstad, Berkowitz and Slater, Graeme Souness's fifth overseas signing, Ulrich van Gobbel, the Holland international defender, from his former club, Galatasaray, takes his spending so far to more than £4 million. "He was the first name that came into my head when I took this job," Souness said. "He solved a lot of problems at Galatasaray." **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
Most Tottenham supporters are not remotely concerned whether Alan Sugar has defeated Terry Venables, or Venables has beaten Sugar, in their latest legal joust. The saga is almost as boring as will or won't Gerry Francis sign a big-name player? Francis's success rate is also easier to comprehend — nil — but he still remains sweet on Trevor Sinclair, of Queens Park Rangers. "If Trevor's transfer request is granted, we would be interested," Francis declared. **RK**

ARSENAL v COVENTRY CITY
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: 0-0, 1-1, 2-0, 2-0, 6-1, 1-2, 3-0, 0-3, 2-1, 1-1
HOW THEY LINE UP
ARSENAL (from): D. Seaman, J. Lukic, L. Dixon, N. Winterburn, M. Keown, A. Adams, S. Bould, A. Linighan, R. ParLOUR, D. Platt, P. Vieira, P. Merson, J. Harrison, G. Helder, P. Shaw, P. Reed, D. Bergkamp.
COVENTRY CITY (from): S. Ogrizovic, B. Borrows, L. Daish, P. Williams, R. Shaw, M. Hall, P. Teller, K. Richardson, G. McAllister, J. Salako, D. Dublin, N. Whelan, E. Jess, P. Nkolou, G. Strachan, M. Isaacs, M. O'Neill, J. Ryan

ASTON VILLA v LEEDS UNITED
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: —, 1-2, —, 0-0, 1-4, 1-1, 0-0, 0-3, 0
HOW THEY LINE UP
ASTON VILLA (from): M. Bosnich, M. Oakes, G. Southgate, U. Ehiogu, R. Scamea, S. Staunton, C. Tiler, I. Taylor, A. Townsend, S. Curcio, D. Yorke, J. Joachim, T. Johnson, S. Milosevic, G. Farrelly.
LEEDS UNITED (from): M. Marley, G. Kelly, C. Palmer, D. Wetherall, R. Johnson, L. Radebe, I. Harle, R. Wallace, A. Couzens, M. Ford, L. Sharpe, R. Rush, M. Hateley, A. Donigo, M. Jackson, P. Beesley, J. Bauri, A. Gray, M. Beoney.

CHELSEA v WIMBLEDON
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 0-4, 1-1, —, 2-5, 0-0, 2-2, 4-2, 2-0, 1-1, 1-2
HOW THEY LINE UP
CHELSEA (from): K. Hitchcock, F. Grodes, D. Petrescu, R. Di Matteo, F. Leboeuf, J. Spencer, G. Vialli, M. Hughes, E. Johnson, D. Wise, S. Clarke, A. Myers, D. Lee, S. Minto, J. Morris, E. Newton.
WIMBLEDON (from): N. Sullivan, K. Cunningham, B. Thetzer, V. Jones, C. Perry, D. Blackwell, R. Earle, O. Leonhardsen, A. Kimble, M. Gayle, E. Ekoku, D. Holdsworth, N. Ardley, M. Harford, D. Jupp, A. Clarke, J. Goodman, J. Ewell, P. Fear, P. Head.

MIDDLESBROUGH v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: —, 2-2, —, —, 3-0, —, —, 0-1
HOW THEY LINE UP
MIDDLESBROUGH (from): A. Miller, N. Cox, G. Fleming, Branon, S. Vickers, N. Pearson, P. Whelan, D. Whyte, N. Barry, C. Hignett, Emerson, F. Ravenhill, R. Mustoe, Juninho, M. Beck, P. Stamp.
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): I. Walker, E. Baardsen, S. Carr, D. Austin, J. Edinburg, S. Campbell, C. Calderwood, S. Nethercott, C. Wilson, R. Fox, D. Howells, A. Nielsen, J. Dazzell, E. Sheringham, C. Armstrong, R. Allen, N. Fenn.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v DERBY COUNTY
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: —, 2-1, 1-1, 2-1, 1-0, —, —, —
HOW THEY LINE UP
NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M. Crossley, D. Lytle, S. Pearce, C. Cooper, S. Blatherwick, C. Allen, C. Bart-Williams, S. Gerrmill, J. Woon, D. Saunders, J. Lee, A. Hasland, B. Roy, S. Chettle, D. Phillips, G. Guinan, A. Fettes.
DERBY COUNTY (from): R. Hought, G. Rowlett, C. Powell, D. Powell, I. Stimac, P. McGrath, J. Laurien, C. Dally, D. Yates, A. Ward, A. Asanovic, P. Simpson, S. Flynn, M. Carbone, L. Cansley, R. Williams, J. Guy.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v BLACKBURN ROVERS
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: —, 3-1, —, 0-0, 1-2, 0-1, 2-1
HOW THEY LINE UP
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): K. Pressman, P. Atherton, I. Nolan, M. Penbridge, D. Strelanovic, D. Walker, G. Whittingham, R. Binkler, R. Humphreys, A. Booth, G. Hyde, S. Oakes, S. Nicol, O. Trustful, D. Hirst, J. Newsome, B. Carbone, M. Clarke.
BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): T. Flowers, J. Kenna, M. Marker, H. Berg, G. Crot, T. Sherwood, L. Bohmer, J. Wilcox, G. Doris, C. Sutton, J. Beattie, N. Gudmundsson, S. Ripley, M. Broome, S. Given, G. Filcott, D. Duff, K. Galtier, I. Pearce.

SOUTHAMPTON v SUNDERLAND
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: —, 3-1, —, —, —, —, —
HOW THEY LINE UP
SOUTHAMPTON (from): N. Moss, R. Dryden, U. van Gobbel, C. Lundestam, E. Berkovic, J. Magilton, R. Slater, M. Tiesler, J. Dodd, E. Ostendstad, G. Watson, N. Shipperley, M. Oakley, S. Charlton, N. Maddison, N. Heaney, G. Potter, P. Benali.
SUNDERLAND (from): A. Cotton, G. Hall, M. Scott, R. Ord, A. McVie, S. Agnew, K. Ball, P. Bracewell, A. Roe, M. Gray, P. Stewart, C. Russell, D. Kelly, L. Hovey, M. Bridges, D. Kubicki, L. Perez.

WEST HAM UNITED v LEICESTER CITY
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 4-1, —, —, 3-1, 1-0, —, —, 0-1
HOW THEY LINE UP
WEST HAM UNITED (from): L. Midonko, M. Bower, J. Dicks, T. Brackler, M. Pieper, S. Bile, J. Moncur, I. Bishop, M. Hughes, F. Lampard, K. Rowland, H. Portillo, I. Dowle, F. Raduciu, I. Dumitrescu, S. Lazarides, P. Shilton.
LEICESTER CITY (from): K. Keeler, S. Grayson, M. Whitrow, J. Watts, S. Prior, S. Walsh, N. Lennon, S. Taylor, I. Marshall, M. Izet, Hestley, S. Clarke, G. Parker, N. Lewis, J. Lawrence, C. Hill, S. Campbell, S. Wilson, K. Poole.

LEADING SCORERS
1: I. Wright (Arsenal).
2: F. Ravenhill (Middlesbrough).
3: L. Ferdinand (Newcastle), A. Shearer (Newcastle).
4: M. La Tassier (Southampton), E. Ekoku (Wimbledon).
5: F. Leboeuf (Chelsea), G. Vialli (Chelsea), P. Berger (Liverpool).
6: E. Cantona (Manchester United), O. G. Solskjaer (Manchester United).
7: Juninho (Middlesbrough), K. Campbell (Nottingham Forest), A. Booth (Sheffield Wednesday), R. Earle (Wimbledon).
8: J. Harrison (Arsenal), D. Yorke (Aston Villa), E. Hestley (Leicester).
9: S. McKennan (Liverpool), D. Beesley (Manchester United).
10: R. Humphreys (Sheffield Wednesday), C. Armstrong (Tottenham), M. Hughes (West Ham), M. Gayle (Wimbledon).
The official internet site of the FA Premier League is at <http://www.fis-caring.com>

LIVERPOOL v EVERTON
TICKETS: Seats available
10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, 2-0, 1-1, 2-1, 3-1, 3-1, 1-0, 2-1, 0-0, 1-2
HOW THEY LINE UP
LIVERPOOL (from): D. James, D. Matteo, J. Scales, S. Bornebye, J. McAlister, M. Wright, P. Bebb, J. Barnes, S. McManaman, M. Thomas, J. Radknapp, S. Collymore, R. Fowler, M. Kennedy, A. Womer, L. Jones, P. Barrow.
EVERTON (from): N. Southall, P. Gerrard, E. Barrett, A. Hinchcliffe, D. Unsworth, D. Watson, C. Short, A. Kanchelskii, J. Ebdell, A. Grant, J. Parkinson, D. Ferguson, G. Speed, G. Stewart, M. Branch, P. Ridsdout, A. Limpar, M. Jackson, V. Samways, M. Hottiger.

NEWCASTLE UNITED v MANCHESTER UNITED
TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: 2-1, 1-0, 0-0, —, —, —, —, 1-1, 1-1, 0-1
HOW THEY LINE UP
NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): P. Snicek, W. Barton, J. Beresford, D. Batty, D. Peacock, R. Lee, P. Beardsley, A. Shearer, L. Ferdinand, F. Aguilera, R. Elliot, D. Ginola, S. Hislop, K. Gillespie, S. Watson, L. Clark, P. Albert, P. Kison.
MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P. Schmeichel, G. Neville, D. Heiri, D. May, G. Pallister, P. Neville, D. Beckham, N. Butt, R. S. Goss, E. Cantona, R. O'Keefe, P. Scholtes, K. Potosky, J. Cruyff, R. Johnson, S. McClair, R. van der Gouw, O. G. Solskjaer.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION
10.45pm BBC 1 Match of the Day (highlights)
11.00am Sky Sports Goals on Sunday
3pm Sky Sports Ford Escort Super Sunday
Newcastle United v Manchester United (live)
Liverpool v Everton (highlights)

Time for football to crack down on the bad boys

When Saturday comes, the managers earn their corn by making judgments on the fitness of football players. Usually, it is a question of hamstrings, dodgy knees, swollen ankles. Today is different: at Aston Villa, Arsenal and Rangers, the managers must try to look into the heads of three errant players and make their team selections accordingly.

The probability is that Mark Bosnich will play in goal for Aston Villa against Leeds United, that Paul Merson will keep his place, even with the return of Dennis Bergkamp for Arsenal against Coventry City, and that Paul Gascoigne will take the field against Aberdeen.

Expediency, in the pursuit of three points, almost always comes before concern about public perceptions of morality. The focus has been on our national sport, on the world's game, in the past week.

Bosnich gave that thoughtless "Basil Fawlty" Nazi salute to a Tottenham Hotspur crowd known to have a large Jewish contingent. Silly boy.

Merson came to the end of the marriage that helped to sustain him through his rehabilitation from drugs, drink and gambling. Sad boy.

Gascoigne, sent off in Amsterdam for manic behaviour on the field, and exposed for allegedly worse behaviour in the bedroom, cost his team any hope of progressing in the European Cup. Wretched man-child.

Abroad, Diego Maradona was pictured in tears because his agent was jailed for reported mafia crimes and drug trafficking. And Paul Ince was sent off in Italy for pushing an opponent who admitted he had racially abused the Englishman.

Of them all, only Ince is automatically suspended from the next game, although he has put in an appeal which, if won, would allow him to compete against Juventus in Turin tomorrow.

When are we going to stop excusing footballers on account of their wealth being so burdensome, their lives so pressured, their temptations

ROB HUGHES



Weekend View

inhuman? Should they be absolved from the normal duties, the normal obligations in society?

At the end of a week in which Manchester United and Liverpool recouped some respect for British football abroad, these are sad questions, yet they dominate.

Gascoigne in turmoil is no stranger to us. He was even sent off and investigated by police, in this corresponding match against Aberdeen last November when he bullied John Inglis in the stomach. I will not pretend that I have inside knowledge of what happened between Paul and Sheryl Gascoigne in their hotel room last weekend. The Daily Mirror pictures of her injuries are graphic and disturbing, but also unworthy, as is some of the reporting, seeking to mock Glenn Hoddle and his moral crusade.

The fact is that Hoddle's predecessor, Terry Venables, condoned habits that Hoddle despises. Venables also built into his England team a dependency on Gascoigne that, the coach now admits, was "a gut feeling". Hoddle, as he assesses this week's misbehaviour, specifically the manner in which Gascoigne kicked out at a fallen opponent, must decide whether he can trust or afford Gascoigne in such a place as Turin next month. Gascoigne's waning genius has given us all much to appreciate, but waning in-

deed was the pace and penetration of the player against Poland this month, and more-over Hoddle has unearthed David Beckham as a young and reliable playmaker for his national team.

The bad behaviour of footballers has dogged England through good and bad times. It does not seem as if this unfortunate image deters the large firms that contribute more and more of their advertising and sponsorship budgets to the game. In which case, should anyone be surprised that those who pick 11 individuals for a task, show similar disinterest in the audience at home, even if so many of them are impressionable youngsters?

Neither England, nor the clubs, can be expected to perform as rehabilitation centres for miscreants. "A football coach is not a priest," Joao Saldanha, who built the wonderful Brazil team of 1970, said.

Saldanha's creed was that the biggest crime was getting caught. Bosnich was caught in his infantile gesture at White Hart Lane last week, yet some have sought to pass off his behaviour as "good humour" and to vilify the "overreaction" of Jewish Tottenham supporters.

How crude the scribes themselves can appear. And how utterly ignorant Bosnich makes himself out to be. Someone, somewhere, must take a lead with the highest paid young professionals in the country. They, after all, have more idle time on their hands than anyone in the nine-to-five workforce. Their bodies have to be rested, yet they fill the vacant hours without attempt to put into perspective the world which pays them so handsomely.

They travel more than almost anyone else and travel is supposed to broaden the mind, not to extend the ignorance and isolation of it. If the players are irresponsible and the managers fail to act on the public behalf, then, once again, the forces of common law will enter football's supposedly sacrosanct disciplinary world.

Honours graduate from Clough academy

THE FACE OF FOOTBALL

Richard Hobson looks at the impact of Martin O'Neill on Leicester City



O'Neill, ever one for having the last word, issues instructions to his Leicester City players from the bench

Martin O'Neill hides his hands and cringes at the sight of a newspaper cutting dated January 1974. It rekindles memories of his early years in England, a time when, in his own estimation, he could do no wrong. A time when, in Nottingham, he was the archetypal Angry Young Man.

Omitted from the Forest side as a disciplinary measure by Allan Brown, the manager, whose claim to fame is that he preceded Brian Clough at the City Ground, his behaviour drew a stinging rebuke in the editorial column of the local paper. The sports editor, now deceased, reminded O'Neill that Forest had plucked him from obscurity and concluded: "Think over your next step well."

O'Neill did just that and replied in five, withering paragraphs. "I was 'plucked' from law studies at Queen's University, Belfast, not from the queue at the Labour Exchange," he wrote, undermining the original article with an eye for detail that would have made him a formidable opponent in court.

He has mellowed since. Playing under Clough tended to have that effect on dissidents, those who stayed at any rate. There is, however, a purpose to the tale and it is one that his adversaries in the FA Carling Premiership are beginning to realise. Underestimate Martin O'Neill at your peril.

Arriving at Filbert Street, I was told by the car park attendant that O'Neill was the best manager in England. Seven months ago he ranked rather lower in the estimation of supporters, who staged a sit-in demonstration after a

home defeat against Sheffield United. O'Neill refused to shelter in the bunker of his office. Instead, he met fans to explain the situation. Leicester City won six of their remaining eight matches and emerged victorious from the play-offs.

"You either cave in or get stronger and I decided to take the latter option," O'Neill said. "People said that the game was a watershed. After 13 weeks in the job, the last thing I wanted was a watershed. The fact is that there had been a lot of false promises here. The previous manager [Mark McGhee] had upped and left saying the side was good enough to win the league at a stretch. That was ludicrous, because there was no appreciable difference between the top eight or nine sides. But I was landed with that prediction."

Leicester's first nine matches have confirmed to O'Neill that the Premiership is a far harder league than the old first division that he remembers as a player. There is little chance now of a side emulating Forest in 1977-78 and

winning the title immediately after promotion. O'Neill played on the right of midfield that season, opposite John Robertson, now his assistant at Leicester, and admits he could not have wished for a better managerial tutor than Clough.

"People say it is amazing the way so many of that side have gone into management. But why should it be, because

"I came to England positively to play football, not just to leave Ireland," he said. "We were relatively secure in Belfast, but events proved that no place there was really secure after all."

O'Neill later discovered that success could elevate sportsmen above sectarianism. He played in the 1982 World Cup finals in Spain.

'He was such a good teacher. The key is not to try and imitate him.'

he was such a good teacher? The key is not to try and imitate him."

O'Neill came to Forest in 1971, having been a part-time player with Distillery. He scored on his debut, but could not prevent the side from being relegated. Nevertheless, it was a huge opportunity — and not only for the 19-year-old. Soon after arriving, he brought his mother and father, two brothers and two sisters to England as tension mounted in Northern Ireland.

when Northern Ireland reached the quarter-finals. He had won 64 caps when his career ended because of a cruciate ligament injury at the age of 32, which also prevented him from bridging the move to administration through player management.

Instead, he took on the reins at Grantham Town and Shephed Charterhouse before taking Wycombe Wanderers from non-league into the second division of the Football League. Disillu-

Presence of Keane at Newcastle gives Keegan food for thought

BY DAVID MADDOCK AND RUSSELL KEMPSON

ALEX FERGUSON, that master of pre-match psychology, seems to be up to his old tricks against Newcastle United. The Manchester United manager said yesterday that Roy Keane, their injured midfielder, would travel with the squad to the North East, but would not play in the important FA Carling Premiership match on Sunday.

The more astute have long taken with a pinch of salt Ferguson's utterings before a big match. Keane is a vital cog in the United machine and, if he is close to fitness, as Ferguson suggested, then it is likely that a risk will be taken on his presence and he could play some part.

"We are taking Roy with us to Newcastle. He'll train with us so I can gauge his fitness for myself, to see just how fast he is progressing," Ferguson said, inviting the suggestion of an ulterior motive in the Ireland international's presence.

Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, said in midweek that the UEFA Cup tie against Ferencváros was "a tremendously open game". He might have substituted defence for game, such was

Newcastle's frailty, and the point is not lost on Ferguson. "They will be forced to attack us and I'm expecting a lot of space to open up," he said.

It is the present state of the home side's defence that will hold the key to the contest. Should they defend as they did in Hungary, then Manchester United will surely repeat their significant victory of last season at St James' Park.

Philippe Albert, however, dismissed the mounting criticism about Newcastle's defence. "It is unfair in the extreme, and I just can't understand the critics at all," the defender said. "I believe that we are genuinely putting it right."

If the game at St James' Park promises to be an open affair, then the Merseyside derby is unlikely to follow suit. Everton under Joe Royle, their manager, and he is intent on maintaining his record, even if it demands stifling tactics. Royle will include Dave Watson, the veteran defender, who has played just 45 minutes of first-team football all season because of a hernia.

Liverpool have no injury problems, but Roy Evans, the manager, is concerned that his side buck the recent derby trend to maintain their

impressive thrust at the top of the table this season, and he said: "If we are to win the title, then we have to perform in the big games like this."

Football's "feel-good" factor has infiltrated Wimbledon, for a change, and they are making the most of it. Joe Kinnear, the manager, has led his side to six successive victories, a club record, and fifth place in the Premiership. He has even made peace with Holdsworth, his unsettled striker.

Now, even though he cannot find a place in Kinnear's successful side, Holdsworth is talking to Sam Hammam, the club owner, about a possible extension to the two years remaining on his contract.



Keane joins squad

Wimbledon travel across London to Chelsea today, where a victory, if other results go their way, would take them to the top of the Premiership. "We're at last getting the respect we deserve but we mustn't get carried away with it," Kinnear said.

Chelsea, in sixth place, will not be celebrating the return to first-team action of Ruud Gullit, their player-manager. Though he played his first full game of the season, since a knee operation during the summer, for the reserves on Thursday, he is still not fit enough for the Premiership.

Gianluca Vialli will start, after his goalkeeping appearance as a substitute in the 2-1 victory against Leicester City last weekend, but Dennis Wise, replaced by Eddie Newton at half-time, will stay on the bench. Steve Clarke takes over the captaincy.

Peter Shilton, 47, the former England goalkeeper, has had his hopes of making his 99th League appearance today dashed. He was due to replace the injured Scott Barrett for Cambridge United against Rochdale at the Abbey Stadium, but was recalled by West Ham United after Steve Mautone was hurt in training.

Weekend Money, page 33

SHINTY: KINGUSSIE EXPECTED TO DOMINATE AGAIN IN BADENOCH DERBY

Newtonmore face unenviable task

By COLL MACDOUGALL

THERE are two important contests in the Marine Harvest Premier League today: the derby between Kingussie and Newtonmore and what should be a very close encounter at Mossfield Stadium between Oban Camanachd and Kyles Athletic.

At one time a Badenoch derby at The Dell would have been the dominant contest of the day, but for the past decade the importance and standing of these confrontations have diminished as Kingussie have dominated the sport. Newtonmore have had a traumatic time, making early exits from cup competitions and struggling in the league.

The irony of the present situation is that they find themselves second to their opponents in that table. This young,

inexperienced side, which includes only three long-standing players, have defeated Inveraray, Oban Camanachd, Glasgow Mid-Argyll and Glenurquhart. Their only defeat has been at the hands of Kyles Athletic, yet nobody expects them to do other than lose easily to Kingussie.

Ian Ross, the Kingussie manager, is fortunate to have so much talent and experience at his disposal that outstanding players such as Michael Clark and John Gibson often start as substitutes. None comes more talented than Ronald Ross, the manager's son, who has been the top scorer in shinty for the past three years. Even if opposing teams manage to contain him, they are faced with his colleagues, particularly the formidable Borthwick brothers: Ally, the captain, David and Steven.

Oban Camanachd, despite snatching

the Scottish championship in June after 58 years, have failed to reproduce that form. Defeated by Newtonmore and Kingussie, a victory over Glenurquhart and a draw with Fort William is not the standard that they should produce. Yet, Nigel Evans, their new manager, is puzzled at what changes he should make. The pool of players is almost identical to that which Colin MacDonald, his predecessor, had, yet success is noticeably absent.

While home advantage should make a difference, there is little likelihood that his team will outwit Kyles, who have performed well since their promotion last season. Apart from a drubbing from Kingussie, they have shown a tenacity of purpose and rediscovered the art of scoring. Even without Dan MacRae, who is injured, they should at least take a share of the points at Oban.

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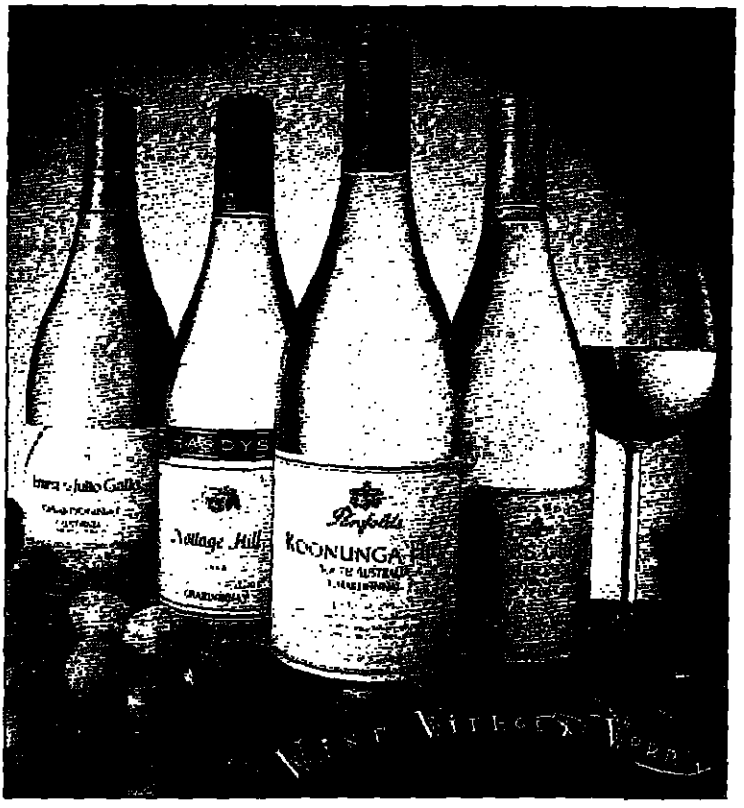
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THE TIMES
A FREE BOTTLE OF WINE AT SAINSBURY'S TOKEN 6

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CHANGING TIMES

BOXING 45

Why is Eubank fighting the sands of time?

SPORT

SATURDAY OCTOBER 19 1996

RUGBY LEAGUE 49

Britain pay heavily for go-slow tactics



Henman has look of champion

FROM DAVID MILLER
IN OSTRAVA
CZECH REPUBLIC

YESTERDAY I saw the man likely to become the first Briton to win Wimbledon for 60 years. In defeating Wayne Ferreira, of South Africa, ranked No 7 in the world, to reach the semi-finals of the Czech indoor tournament here, Tim Henman gave a performance as good, if not better, than when beating Yevgeny Kafelnikov at Wimbledon this year. In the truest sense, it was complete.

On the fast Green Set surface, manufactured in France, Henman hit ten aces. More impressive than his consistently deep and powerful serving, however, was his range of ground strokes.

After going down 6-4, 6-3 in 57 minutes, the outplayed Ferreira said, a shade grudgingly: "Tim's definitely one of the best of the young players, with as much potential as any of them."

Ferreira is Henman's second scalp among the world's top ten players, and this will be his sixth ATP Tour semi-final. David Felgate, his

coach, who tends to be as carefully understated as his 23-year-old protégé, said: "Maybe he has never played better, though he was good against Forget, a fortnight ago [in Lyon]. He's played greater rallies and greater points, but when the two opportunities came to break serve, he took them instantly." It had been the same against Greg Rusedski the previous day.

To reach his first final tomorrow, Henman must today eliminate not Todd Martin, as was expected, but David Prinosil, of Germany, ranked No 38. In yet another upset, Prinosil, a few months older than Henman and with a single career title last year, beat Martin, ranked No 11, in straight-set tie-breaks.

Prinosil defeated Henman in the first round of Wimbledon in 1994 and subsequently in two Challenger events. With Goran Ivanisevic and Boris Becker also gone from the top half of the draw, the prospects look invitingly open for the first British player with a champion's demeanour since the legendary Fred Perry.

There were a number of



Henman reaches for a forehand during his authoritative victory over Ferreira

elements that marked Henman's display as being special, notably the care and cunning with which he constructed the winning of key points. That which secured the first set was an example. Serving at 5-4 down,

Ferreira looked comfortable with an opening ace. The next service Henman returned deep, came in behind it and put away the next volley. Another sound return and Ferreira's awkward backhand half-volley from mid-court

into the net had the South African in trouble. Next Henman played a steady, unforced backhand down the line, advanced to the net and Ferreira, attempting a cross-court forehand pass, again found the net: 15-40.

In a short rally, Henman squandered the first set point with an overhead forehand, but now he revealed the knife. Three times he ran round his backhand on the baseline, as Ferreira tried to force him wide on his weaker flank, to hit penetrating flat forehands to Ferreira's own favoured two-fisted backhand. After the third, Henman sped to the net to punch a forehand volley to the opposite corner. Ferreira, whose emotions lie close to the surface, banged his racket on the ground in irritation.

In the next game, opening the second set, Henman was fortunate to escape from his only, brief loose phase. Leading 40-0, with Ferreira hanging his head of sandy curls, Henman allowed his opponent to recover to deuce with three consecutive errors. He then reasserted himself, and with mounting authority moved to a 4-3 lead. If Ferreira, with 13 titles to his credit, was to make a fight of it, now was the moment.

Under pressure from Henman's steady returning, Ferreira was 15-40, but recovered to deuce. He saved a third break point and twice himself

held advantage point, which Henman nullified with winners. On the fourth deuce, Ferreira hit a huge swerving service wide to Henman's forehand. At full stretch, Henman uncorked an acute and unplayable dipping cross-court return, and then took the game with a deep backhand return on the next service.

Without wavering, he served to love for the match. He had put 62 per cent of his first services in court, winning 28 out of 33 (85 per cent). That is champion tennis. Ferreira had won their only previous encounter, in Toronto just before the US Open, in straight sets.

Henman quietly savoured his achievement. "I don't think I've played better against an opponent of that calibre," he said. "I felt good about all aspects and served as well as I ever have. In Toronto, I was on the defensive. Today, I wanted to take the initiative." He did, with a vengeance.

It is particularly helpful to the British No 1 that, unlike either of his opponents of the past two days, bad calls leave him unmoved, beyond the occasional sardonic gesture.

League in late bid to prevent strike by players

By Russell Kempson

LAST-DITCH negotiations are to be held between the Football League and the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) in an attempt to avert a walk-out by Nationwide League players. It is understood that the result of the strike ballot, due to be announced at lunchtime today, may be delayed as officials from both sides enter into eleventh-hour discussions.

The final counting of votes — believed to be 90 per cent in favour of industrial action — took place, independently, at the headquarters of the Electoral Reform Society, in London yesterday. Though the League has maintained that a strike would be illegal, the PFA went ahead with its ballot, confident that it would receive the expected mandate from its members.

However, the League's door remains open. "It always has been," Chris Hull, a League spokesman, said yesterday. "Were in the business of consultation, not confrontation, and there may be developments ahead that could change the situation."

The dispute involves the amount of money that the PFA receives annually from the League's television revenue. Traditionally, it has been ten per cent, but the League has changed it to a "discretionary" payment. In light of the League's £25 million deal with BSkyB — part-owned by News International, owners of *The Times* — which came into effect this season, the PFA wants the ten per cent figure reinstated.

After lengthy yet fruitless discussions, the PFA decided to ballot the Nationwide League players, provoking claims of "brinkmanship" from the League. Any strike

Champion reveals his fighting qualities to snatch victory after inglorious morning

Stricker fails to match Els power play

By John Hopkins, Golf Correspondent

THE extraordinary fighting qualities of South Africans at matchplay golf, first demonstrated by Gary Player at Wentworth in 1965, were displayed again in the second round of the Toyota World Match Play Championship yesterday. Ernie Els, the defending champion, was six down to Steve Stricker, of the United States, at lunch and then produced a sublime second round to snatch victory on the last green.

It was 31 years since Player, six down at lunch against Tony Lema, lost the 19th and won on the 37th. Yesterday Els's afternoon round contained eight birdies in 16 holes. If it had not been so wet and miserable, it could be said that he set the West Course alight. He chipped in twice and had only 11 putts on the outward nine on his way to a 66. With an almost British display of understatement, Stricker said: "It was pretty disappointing to lose a six-up lead but he did have a wonderful last 18."

Considering that play was delayed in the morning for nearly two hours because of flooded greens, and that rain fell heavily for much of the afternoon, the standard of golf was remarkable. It would have been a credit on a sunny, calm autumn day such as Thursday. Vijay Singh was merciless in his dismissal of Steve Jones, going to the turn in 30 after lunch before finishing off the US Open champion on the 28th hole.

Tom Lehman was out in 32 in his afternoon round and beat Mark O'Meara 6 and 5 and Mark Brooks, the US PGA champion, birdied the 17th and 18th holes in both rounds to sneak home by one hole against Colin Montgomerie, of Scotland. Brooks and Montgomerie were round in approximate 67s in the afternoon.

Stricker's pale face is naturally taut and emotionless. When you watch him to try to gauge his reaction to a stroke it is impossible to read anything into his expression. He cuts a modest figure, wide-eyed, gushing in his politeness

and continually undervaluing himself. "I think I am the underdog for the whole tournament," Stricker said, which suggests either that he is spoofing, because that role belonged, surely, to Nobua Serizawa, of Japan, or he is one of the few Americans in need of some lessons in positive thinking.

Stricker may be underselling his ability because yesterday morning, in particular, he looked imperious, reaching

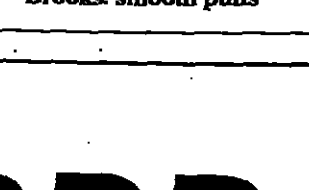
to eight feet. On the 26th he chipped in from well off the green. On the 27th, Els hit his second well right, chipped to 40 feet and holed a putt that, to Stricker, must have felt like a blow to the solar plexus. "That was a hallelujah putt," Els said.

By then Els was back to two down and there were moments as someone in the crowd shouted: "Come on Ernie" or some such encouragement when Stricker must have felt particularly lonely. There were not many cries of: "Come on, Steve." At times like that, Stricker he must have felt in need of some reassurance. Perhaps having his wife as his caddy was not for the best in this situation. She, too, looked slightly intimidated.

Stricker will depart these shores with the roars of a bedraggled crowd ringing in his ears in acknowledgement of a remarkable shot on the 36th hole. His drive having ended in a bunker, Stricker attempted too much with his six-iron second shot, the ball catching the lip and shooting sideways. Then came the shot that lit up a dark, damp evening.

He stood with one foot half in the bunker, took several swishes at his ball and then let fly with a three-wood that reached the green and stopped 15 feet from the flag. "That was one of the best shots I have ever seen," Els said.

Brooks showed in winning the US PGA last August that he can roll in the putts and he underlined this in his defeat of Montgomerie, who was two up on the 25th tee. Five successive holes were halved from the turn in the second round before the American sank a 22-foot putt on the 33rd to take the lead, though Montgomerie levelled the match on the 34th. Brooks then chipped and single-putted on each of the two par fives that bring the West Course to such a rousing conclusion. The first gave him a one-hole lead, the second the match by one hole. He will play Els today.



Brooks: smooth putts



Els displays the power from the tee that helped him to retrieve a six-shot deficit against Stricker yesterday

Broad canvas 47
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would come into effect early next month, with the PFA instructing its members not to play unless the television cameras were withdrawn. The Grimsby Town v Sheffield United fixture, on November 3, is the first in the firing line.

Huddersfield Town against Bradford City, on November 8, and Crystal Palace against Queens Park Rangers, on November 10, could also be affected. "There's no reason why the games can't go ahead, as long as the cameras are turned off," Pat Nevin, the PFA chairman, said.

With no live screening of the games, the clubs would probably forfeit their match fees — £40,000 for the home team, £20,000 for the visitors.

Gordon Taylor, the PFA chief executive, and Brendan Batson, his deputy, have missed the developments this week, having attended a two-day meeting of the International Association of Football Players' Unions, in Athens. They were due to return last night and are expected to resume talks with the League early next week.

Brighton and Hove Albion's future in the Nationwide League appears even more uncertain after Portsmouth, who they were due to share a ground with next season, pulled out of the agreement. Brighton have to find a new home by May, when their one-year deal with Chertwell Land, the owners of the Goldstone Ground, runs out.

Uncertainty also surrounds Port Vale, the struggling first division club. Bill Bell, the chairman, said yesterday that the club is likely to close unless a buyer comes forward in the next week. Bell, who put Vale up for sale on Thursday said that the only interest had come from "a business outside football".

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CARMART: YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT'S USED, ON THE FORECOURTS

Cheap Seat's fun

ROADTEST

AFTER BUMPING my head on the door frame and seeing the coffee mug slide off the aerodynamic bonnet, I resolved to see the Seat Alhambra through less misty eyes, Nick Nuttall writes.

After five months driving an E-registration Yugo (a loan from my wife's grandmother after the family Audi was dispatched to the scrapheap by a head-on collision) any new car would make me feel like a lottery winner, especially one in which children can be eased rather than shoehorned into seats without breaking my back.

And so motoring hedonism was mine for several days in the driving seat of the Alhambra, motoring around the Normandy countryside with children, mother and aunt, packets of cornflakes and luggage up to the substantial gunwales.

Gone was the familiar grinding of the Yugo's rear axle, an effect not too dissimilar to a Dakota taking off.

Instead, here was a motoring smoothie which slid serenely over poplar-edged, Gallic country roads. Even my auntie Marjorie, who en-

joys a good natter, was kept entertained and purse-lipped trying to divine the workings of the electric windows.

These seemingly turbo-charged gadgets would zip up and down, oblivious to her shouts of "stop". In the wake of her attempts to master the controls, other features, fitted as standard, seemed a worthwhile luxury; particularly the air conditioning which meant we could sit in comfort without aunting having to worry about getting a blast of fresh air from her aippy electric windows.

THE ALHAMBRA, for all its good points, does have a few drawbacks for the serious family man likely to buy a vehicle like this, with its pretensions to be the perfect transport for the nuclear unit. Take that bonnet: it might be fuel-savingly aerodynamic, but on a picnic it's of little use to man or beast. The shape instantly dispatches the Thermos, the wine glass and the corned beef tin to the floor.

On a more important note, I



Looks familiar? The Alhambra is a close sibling of costlier MPVs from Ford and VW

SEAT ALHAMBRA

Engine: Four-cylinder 2-litre petrol developing 115bhp at 5,400rpm through a five-speed manual gearbox driving front wheels. Automatic gearbox version available by the end of the year.

Performance: 0-62mph about 14.4 seconds, top speed 110mph, fuel consumption 42.2 mpg at 50mph.

Equipment: airbags, radio-cassette with eight speakers, front electric windows, air conditioning, three-year warranty, central locking, roof rails, luggage compartment cover.

Price: £16,995

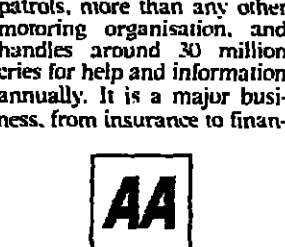
All in all, it means that when the free kit is included, the Seat, with a basic price of £16,445 on the road, is about £2,000 cheaper than rivals. So why buy a Ford or VW when you can run out to buy the same vehicle? You just have to forego the familiar brand-image badges.

SPARE PARTS

MORE THAN 90 years after heads bobbed from behind hedges to warn motorists of police ahead, the AA is celebrating a milestone: nine million members, a third of all drivers. Kevin Edson writes.

It grew out of the Brighton Motor Road Patrol which kept watch on the Brighton Road to warn motorists of upcoming speed traps. In 1905, the Automobile Association was founded to represent the interests of the motorist.

Now the AA has 3,800 patrols, more than any other motoring organisation, and handles around 30 million calls for help and information annually. It is a major business, from insurance to finan-



cial services, credit cards, driving schools and hotel bookings services.

TIMES HAVE rarely been better for Fiat in this country with booming sales. Now the range is being extended with turbo-diesel Bravo and Brava models and a Brava 1.6SX which gets a four-speed automatic transmission.

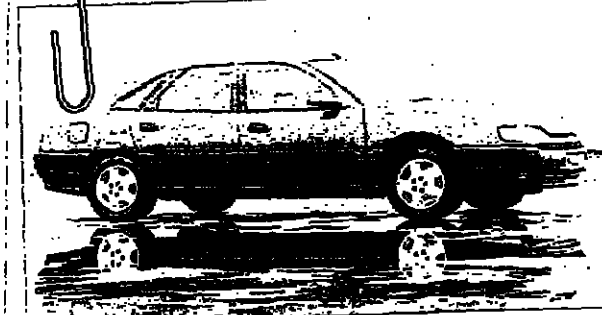
The 1.6 SX transmission is mated to the five-door hatchback's tried-and-tested 16-valve 1.6-litre, which can pump out 103bhp, so that acceleration from standstill to 62mph is still a respectable 12.2 seconds and top speed 112mph. Fuel consumption is 27.4mpg on average.

The diesels use a 1.9-litre power pack worth either 75bhp (44.4mpg average fuel consumption) or 100bhp (44.1mpg). Prices will be announced soon.



Brava: extended range

USED CAR BRIEF



Renault Safrane

Before the Safrane there was the 25, a meandering and bloated executive car. Renault launched the Safrane in 1993 as a five-door hatchback to boost the company's executive appeal. Initially available as a petrol-powered 12-valve 2-litre worth 135 brake horse power, there was also a powerful 3-litre V6. A year later came the upmarket RT, complete with a 140bhp 2.2-litre. From 1994, 2-litre Renaults had eight valves instead of 12 and less power while a 2.5-litre turbo-diesel with automatic transmission was added.

GOOD NEWS

Comfort, size and everything. Even poverty level Safranese come with tinted glass and anti-lock brakes while most have air conditioning and power steering as standard. Best news is that the birth of the Safrane meant the death of the unloved and barge-like Renault 25.

LOOK FOR

Executive and V6 models with leather upholstery, and cruise control. V6 adds heated windscreen and electric front seats. Make sure electric toys and on-board computers work as well as they should. Four-speed automatic is smooth and responsive even if performance and economy suffer.

SAFETY RATING

Four stars, awarded to all four models, matched to latest generation anti-lock braking on all models. The car's safety as well as its looks. Bigger is better when it comes to safety and the Safrane has the size and weight to hold its own.

REPLACEMENT PARTS

(Prices include VAT) Clutch assembly £170; full exhaust £275; catalytic converter £250; headlamp £280; front brakepads (pair) £40; alternator £185 (exchange); tyre £50 to £70.

OVERALL

Renault's big cars, unlike their cheeky smaller models, always struggle with image, or lack of it. The Safrane was preceded by the Renault 25, little loved here, and the Safrane is last becoming the Cinderella of the range. The car is big, while fast depreciation on new models means they fill all the classic requirements of a lot of car for not much money second-hand. For luxury lovers seek out the Executive and V6 models.

Audi v BMW in coupé war

AUDI is attacking BMW's aspirational 3-Series Coupé by pitching prices for its new A3 coupé up to £2,000 lower. The three-door A3 will cost £13,795 yet still be packed with goodies, such as anti-lock brakes, immobiliser, twin airbags, electric windows and power steering. The top car in the range will be the 1.8T Sport at £17,860.

The A3 is another brick in the wall of the company's changing image, from frumpy breadsman to Mercedes and BMW, Germany's Big Two, to outright challenger. That is why Audi might not bring any five-door versions here, aiming instead to pitch the coupé's image as a prestige competitor to BMW. Around 5,000 A3s could be sold here



The A3: priced to undercut

next year, among 30,000 Audis, a substantial improvement on the 20,000 cars of 1993.

Audi needed to act, with BMW increasing the pace. BMW this week unveiled its gorgeous Z3 Roadster in Britain and promised all 3,330 advance orders would be supplied at £19,950 during 1997. Fears were high that BMW would be overwhelmed by demand for its new American-built sports car, with its 1.9-litre engine, but the British arm has secured production of 4,000 right-hand-drive cars.

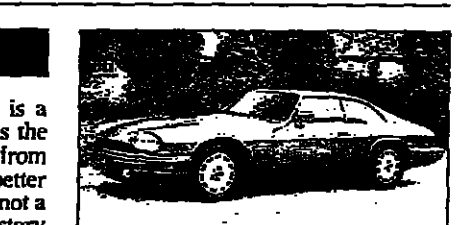
FORECOURT

JAGUAR'S XJS grand tourer is a popular second-hand buy, reports the CAP Black Book. Convertibles, from 1990-91 in particular, are doing better than coupés, and high mileage is not a deterrent, though a full service history is a must, writes Vaughan Freeman.

When new, the XJS V12 was £12,000 more expensive than the six-cylinder cars, but the V12's 12mpg fuel consumption means little difference between second-hand prices. Expect to pay under £20,000 for a 1992 4-litre convertible and around £25,000 for a 1995 version.

Land Rover's Discovery TDI turbo-diesel is good value too, and pre-1993 cars are best value. Image is second to none, insurance costs are relatively low and resale values strong. Expect to pay slightly more than £12,500 for a 1991 J-reg five-door TDI with under 50,000 miles on the clock.

The Kia Pride is cheap and cheerful.



Mileage no deterrent on the XJS

represents excellent value, and is cheap to run. But it runs on fantastically dark-looking whitewall tyres.

The LX model represents best value, the 5-door in particular, so expect to pay under £3,000 for a K-reg car with under 40,000 miles on the clock. Beware ex-driving school cars and any with above average mileage.

Pride is a remodelled Mazda 121 so there is reassurance that the heart of the car is mechanically sound, plus the added advantage that any car costing less than £3,000 second-hand, if looked after, can never lose much money when you come to sell it.

FORD

SCORPIO 2.0i 16v 4 Dr. Auto. 1995. 120,000 miles. 4,000 miles. £15,500. Tel: 01238 560065

HONDA NSX

NSX Coupe 3.0i. 1995. 120,000 miles. £19,950. Tel: 01753 568002

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1994. 4.0i Sport Auto. Central lock. 120,000 miles. £12,000. Tel: 01909 479921/0421 595692

XJR

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XK8

Coupe. Sapphire Blue. 1995. 120,000 miles. £25,000. Tel: 01785 282002/0973 942222(mobile).

XJS

V12 1989 Convertible. Dark Blue. 41,000 miles. FSH. 1 owner. First class condition. £12,500. 0181 3402172(03) 0171 2676569(0).

XJ6

1994. 3.2i Auto. British Racing Green. 11k miles. £27,950. 0181 807 3210 (off. hrs) 0181 998 6162 (home)

XJ12

6.0 1993. Daimler grey / black leather. All unit refinements. Lovely motor car. High miles, lower price. £13,500. 0131 558 3273

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LWB. 82.5/8. FSH. £13,995. Tel: 01832 848555. No trade.

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MG

1994. 1.8i. 120,000 miles. £12,000. Tel: 01382 771161

MGF VVC

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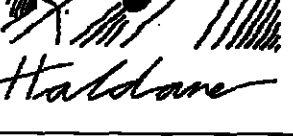
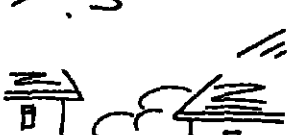
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Pocket rocket at pocket-size prices

**Daihatsu's
Move is tiny,
stylish and set
to hit the UK.**

Stuart Birch says it shifts

Life is full of surprises: the Daihatsu Move Turbo is one of them. Floor the throttle of a Ferrari, Porsche or Aston Martin and you know you'll get storming acceleration, wonderful engine noises — and possibly a speeding ticket. Totally wrong. What actually happens is that the wheels start black-lining the concrete, the steering wheel tugs in your hands, the engine notes rises with turbine like insistence, the rev counter reaches 8,500 before gear changes are needed, and the car very rapidly approaches a speed which seems more than unlikely.

Fortunately, when all this happened to me in the Daihatsu, I was on the company's test track in Japan — for the speedometer needle moved inexorably past 100 mph to the bottom of the dial and started to go round again.

By then the word "prudence" was nagging my brain; after all, this car was small enough to fit into the toy cupboard when I had finished playing with it.

The Move Turbo is great fun. But fun cars — particularly those that combine low price with quality and practicality — are increasingly serious business. They don't have to have that level of performance but they do need to be stylistically special: the Move is.

Unveiled at the Birmingham motor show and on sale in Britain next March — initially with a larger but lower-powered three-cylinder engine — it is a car which slots into the burgeoning new smaller-than-small car class which will be populated by the likes of Ford's Ka.



The Move Turbo is a true mini supercar, combining great fun with a low price. Daihatsu's initial British imports will have a larger but lower-powered three-cylinder engine

DAIHATSU MOVE

Engine: Three-cylinder 850cc, 42bhp driving five-speed manual gearbox, three-speed automatic option.
Performance: 0-62mph about 14 seconds; top speed 91mph (auto 85mph), composite fuel consumption 47.9 mpg.
Equipment: Not yet decided but basic model with driver airbag, radio-cassette. Top model with electric windows and central locking. Air conditioning will be an option on both, power steering a possibility.
Price: £7,000 to £8,000.

ride a bit jiggly. The car feels lightweight as it hustles along on its tiny wheels, but it conforms to all necessary European safety regulations.

"We will introduce the 42bhp Move first and are now considering the 64bhp Move Turbo for Britain, possibly with four-wheel drive," says Williams.

Daihatsu, which counts itself as one of the world's leading manufacturers of small cars, is confident that the downsizing seen in Japan in recent years will be reflected in Europe. It is not alone in that philosophy. Ford's little Ka will be joined by similar models; even the might of Mercedes-Benz is focused on

developing its own small A-class car, while later will come a tiny model, the Smart Car, developed by Mercedes and Swatch. Daihatsu has reason to be confident of the Move's success. In Japan, 100,000 were sold in eight months.

The company will also introduce a scaled-down MPV, the Grand Move, next March. Unlike the Move it is conventionally shaped, but still roomy, and will sell for £11,000 in basic form; about £13,000

with air conditioning, ABS brakes and other goodies. Lightly loaded, its performance from a 1500cc engine proved brisk, but with four adults on board, acceleration was a shade tardy although top speed is around 100 mph.

There are two further Daihatsu models on the way: the little Cuore three and five-

door hatchback at only £6,000 from next May, and a four-wheel-drive 1.3 litre "sports utility", rather like a smaller version of the Toyota RAV4.

Daihatsu was the first Japanese company to sell cars in the UK. The Daihatsu Compagno Berlina is now all but forgotten although the first of the few sold in the UK has been restored and is owned by the company.

The Move is set to be something else altogether. Daihatsu says it has been the fastest-selling car ever in the Japanese market.

And if Daihatsu also decides to bring the mini supercar Move Turbo to Britain, do consider making room for it in your toy cupboard: it's a humdinger.

[illegible]

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CAR 96

Steelmakers are helping our flabby cars slim down, says Vaughan Freeman

Weight of things to come?



Sunglasses from Serengeti take care of winter glare

You can see clearly now

Thousands of drivers wear a permanent frown at this time of year. They turn their cars to head off into the sun... and they can't see a thing. Low winter sun is a menace for drivers, who have to squint into glaring light shining directly into their eyes. Wearing any old sunglasses is not the answer, for fashion is only one factor when deciding on eyewear behind the wheel.

They might look good, but vision could be distorted by glasses with lenses that are too dark for prevailing condi-

tions but not able to deal with the brightest light.

Serengeti specialises in sunglasses that give clear sight for driving, with photochromic lenses which adjust to the light and absorb damaging ultra-violet rays. But style also plays a part and Serengeti makes frames in a range of styles, from classic shades to clip-ons for motorists who have prescription lenses. We have 20 gorgeous pairs of Serengeti glasses to give away, so that Car 96 readers will be able to see clearly. To enter all you need to do is answer the following question: on what day, and at what approximate time, was the last partial eclipse of the sun? — and get it to us, on a postcard, by October 28. Reply to Serengeti competition, Car 96, The Times, 1, Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Usual rules apply.

CORRECTION

In our Cars from Hell column of July 27, we incorrectly suggested, later in the article, that the TVR Centre at Arkeley had asked the dissatisfied owner of a TVR Chimaera never to purchase one again. We apologise to the TVR Centre for this error.

Like Billy Bunter on a cream-tea diet, today's steel-based cars are getting ever faster as manufacturers bow to customers' tastes for greater comfort, and to legislation demanding greater safety and fewer emissions.

Air conditioning is the latest luxury that drivers cannot do without. In Europe one car in three has air conditioning, a figure that will rise to 50 per cent within four years, and which adds yet more weight to the car.

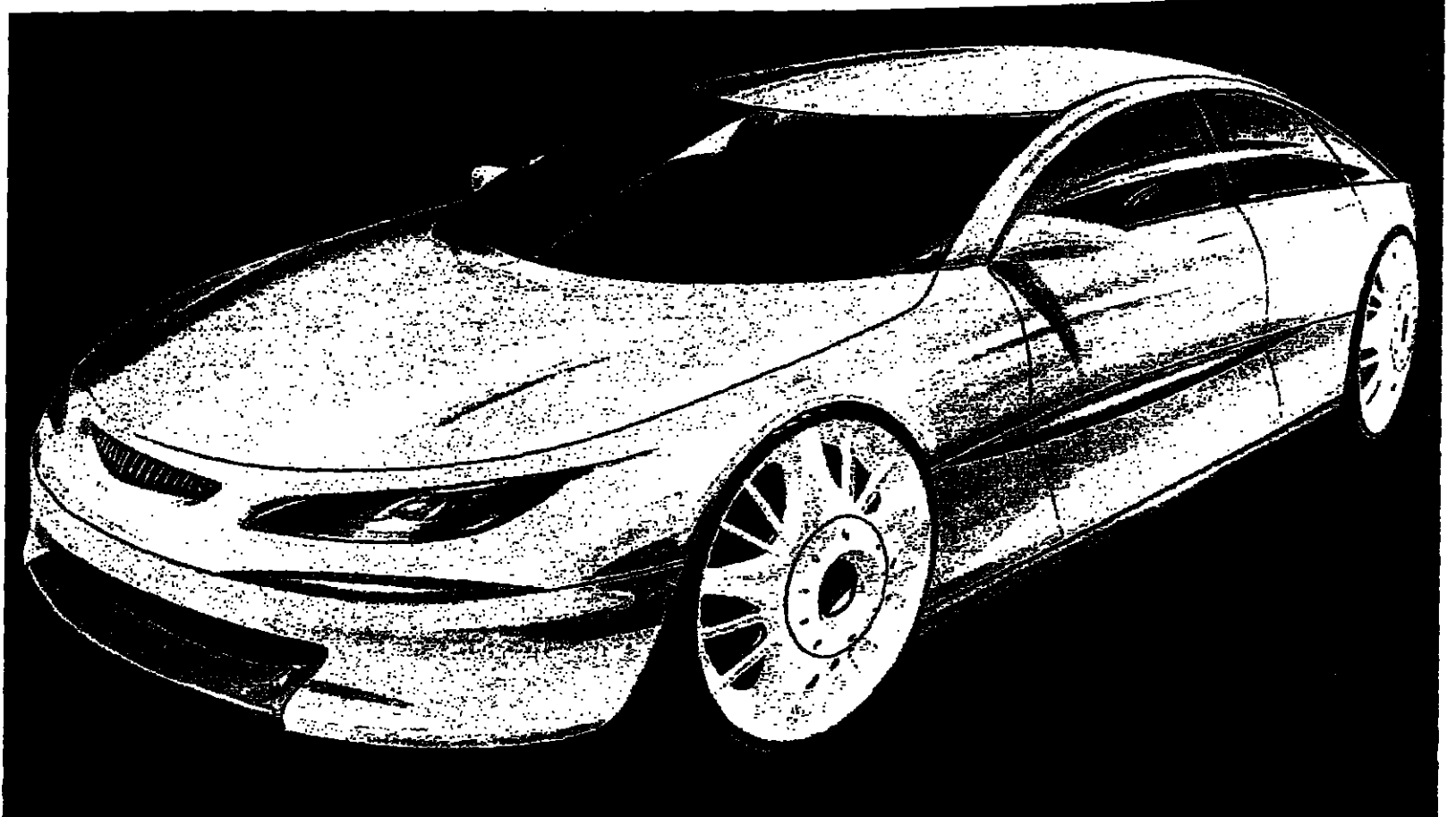
Yesteryear's push-button radio was ousted by the radio-cassette and now there is in-car phone and CD player with racking system in the boot. On-board alarms are a way of life, as are roof-mounted ski-boxes and cycle racks. More weight again.

New emissions regulations to be introduced in the year 2000 and more again that are proposed for 2005 will also add weight, just as the addition from the early 1990s of catalytic converters added weight. Meanwhile almost every new car is now fitted with an airbag as standard for the driver, with side-impact door beams.

If there is an automotive equivalent of the Nigel Lawson diet, it is usually offered as a cocktail of ingredients including aluminium (expensive and difficult to work), plastic, and the exotic and eye-wateringly pricey carbon-fibre materials derived from Formula One racing.

Can steel then survive as the carmaker's material of choice? Ten years ago everyone was confidently forecasting that we would be driving to the funeral of the petrol engine car in its battery-powered successor. But now it seems that the end of steel is nigh.

Yet every year the world's carmakers consume something like 35 million tons of steel, and more than half of a modern car is built of steel.



Light metal: a concept car drawn up by a worldwide steelmaker's consortium committed to developing lighter, stronger and greener vehicles

old-fashioned technology, it is the image, not the material, that is outdated. It is one of the few materials that is 100 per cent recyclable. Almost half the steel in a brand new car is in fact "old", recycled steel living a second, third or fourth life, and in the near future around 95 per cent of the steel in a car will be recycled.

The problem for car manufacturers is to reverse the trend of cars getting heavier, while staying with steel, a material they are familiar with and which has few rivals for its practicality and versatility.

To help them, British Steel has established its own Automotive Engineering Group

(AEG), based in Coventry, which will have a staff of 30, aimed at helping carmakers and components manufacturers come up with lightweight steel cars and parts for the future.

The aim is to cut the weight of steel cars by a third, says British Steel technology director, Dr Jeff Edington: "The car industry is of vital importance to British Steel and represents about 20 per cent of our total business. Our bottom line is to offer customers good value for money and we think steel is the solution."

Former Ford and Nissan engineer Jon King, the Group's director, says: "Vehicle manufacturers face the major challenges of the next millennium, of fuel economy, cost-effective manufacture, enhanced safety and improving the environment."

To help in these tasks, British Steel will be focusing on reducing vehicle weight by the development and applica-

tion of new technology, while exploiting the inherent high quality and low cost advantages of steel, its crash-worthiness, ease of manufacture and recyclability.

My group will work between the steel and automotive industries to help produce vehicles that are safer, more durable and easier to manufacture and recycle. The aim is a 30 per cent weight reduction, but we are not going to get there in one leap."

In collaboration with more than 30 other steel companies, British Steel is also taking part in a \$20 million worldwide venture known as ULSAB, the UltraLight Steel Auto Body, to share research and development of the new svelte, slim and lightweight Kate Moss of tomorrow's steel-car world.

car by using new steel and new steel technologies."

But surely steel is steel is steel? Not so. New steels using high-carbon and alloys are being developed which will last longer, and resist wear and fatigue more effectively, while at the same time giving greater strength and reducing weight.

Another avenue will be to collaborate on the design of cars right from the start, so that the steel experts can help car designers and manufacturers eradicate design flaws which result in more steel than necessary being used, so adding unnecessary weight.

The result, if all goes according to plan, will be steel-bodied cars far stronger and safer than today's, despite having shed a third of their weight, so that their owners can then add even more luxuries, bigger stereo speakers and more bicycle racks, without worrying about what their vehicle tips the scales at.

DR DASHBOARD

Haven't these new cars been built yet?

Q This new steel car sounds great. I can't wait to see it at the motor show. What is it like?

A Afraid I don't know. The car was launched at the motor show but actually nobody has built it yet.

Q Never mind, how sexy is the new baby Land Rover, which I read so much about this week? That was launched at the motor show, wasn't it?

A Actually that isn't at the show either. This is the not-the-car-launch show. The baby Land Rover will not appear until next year's motor show at the earliest.

Q What is the point of making a fuss about a car that doesn't exist and which we can't see?

A Lots of reasons. BMW wanted to counter the bad publicity it has been getting since its takeover of Rover. Announcing the £350 million project proved BMW is investing lots of lovely money in Rover and builds expectations among buyers.

Q What's the point of going to the blessed Motor Show then?

A So you can see lots of cars which have only just reached Britain, of course. You can see that fabulous new Jaguar XK8, Ferrari's new 550 and the pretty little Lotus Elise — three cars new to this country and among dozens of models on show.

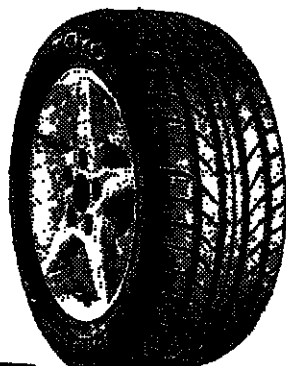
Q What do you mean dozens? Are there more than usual then?

A Lots more. Carmakers have become very clever at using the same basic components and chassis to make several different cars. So instead of turning out cars by the 200,000 all the same shape, they are putting new bodies on similar floorplans to extend production of conventional saloons and hatchbacks into convertibles, estates, people carriers and sports cars. The result is more choice than at almost any time in the history of the industry, a selection of models you can see in Birmingham in the next week.

ACCESSORIES

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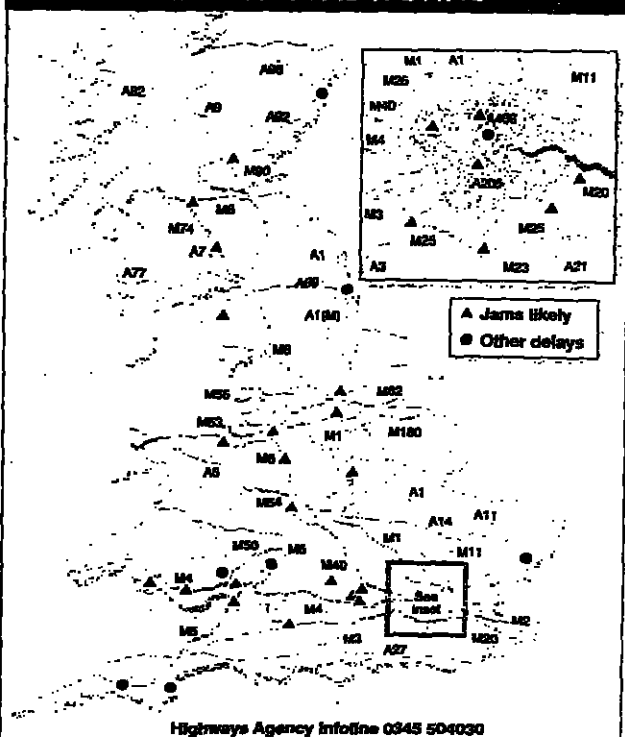
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AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

● LONDON
A21 Orpington; roadworks on Sevenoaks Road.
A217 Wandsworth; roadworks on the south side of Wandsworth bridge.
A400 Kentish Town; means southbound traffic diverted from the Archway roundabout.
A406 East Finchley; traffic down to a single lane.
A4005 Harrow; temporary lights on Headstone Road.
● SOUTH-EAST
M4 junction 10; entry and exit sliproads at the Reading East (A329M) junction closed overnight.
A4 Reading; restrictions and lane closures.
A404 High Wycombe; temporary lights.
M25 junction 2-3; contraflow.
A415 East of Abingdon; various restrictions.
M25 junctions 6-10; restrictions and lane closures both ways.
● SOUTH-WEST
A38 Near Liskeard; contraflow.
A381 Trelowarren; restrictions for roadworks.
M5 junctions 17-20; contraflow with a 50mph speed limit across the Avonmouth Bridge.
A38 Gloucester; major roadworks on Cole Avenue.
A303 Yarnbury Hill; contraflow.
● MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA
A500 Tulse — Stoke on Trent; contraflow.
A6 Lockington; contraflow from just north of the M1 junction 24 to Sawley Island (B6540).
A137 Ipswich; traffic down to a single lane.
A41 Wolverhampton; temporary lights on Bliston Road between Eagle Street and Chillingworth Street.
● NORTH
M6 junctions 20-21a;

carriageway reduced to three lanes for widening work near the Thelwall Viaduct.
A635 Barnsley; Doncaster Road closed outbound.
A167M Newcastle; restrictions on the central motorway.
M1 junction 47; major long-term roadworks.
● WALES
A548 Between Oakenholt and Kelsterton; contraflow.
M4 junctions 35-34; contraflow.
A472, Pontypool; contraflow between Pontypool and the Heron roundabout. Expect lengthy delays.
M4 junctions 23a-24; lane closures between the Magor and Newport junctions.
A4067 Swansea; contraflow at Ynysforgan.
● SCOTLAND
A90 Aberdeen; restrictions and lane closures on the bridge of Don.
A96 Between Cockermouth (A508) and Bassenthwaite Lakes (B5291); temporary lights.
M77 junction 23, Dumbreck Interchange; no right turn from the M77 onto Dumbreck Road.
A74 Between Millbank and Paddy's Creek; a single lane each way.
A9 Perth; restrictions in both directions.

MAJOR ROADWORKS



AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long

CITROEN BUILT ITS CARS IN ENGLAND AT SLOUGH UNTIL 1966...

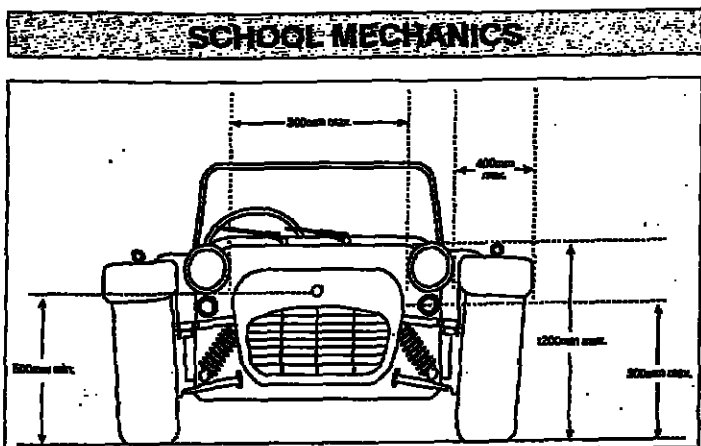
RUNNING ON A MIXTURE OF METHANOL AND NITROMETHANE, BIKER WILLY JOHNSON HIT 225 MPH ON HIS 1962 TRIUMPH T120 SUPERALUMINER

THE MAXIMUM FINE FOR SPEEDING IN NIGERIA IS UNDER £4

ONE PARTS FROM HIS HONDA ACCORD, MUSICIAN BILLY MURPHY HAS MADE 15 INSTRUMENTS INCLUDING THE DOORBOMB AND THE EXHAUSTPHONE

Kevin Eason meets the inventor of a self-build budget car who has written an idiot-proof guide to making one

The Locost option spares expense



Read all about it: simple engineering for weekend carbuilders

Ron Champion couldn't afford to buy the car his student son wanted — so he built it himself. The result was a natty two-seater costing just £250 made from scrap and spare parts.

The simple design was so successful that Ron's students at Oundle School have built 30 versions of the little car and there are queues of pupils trying to get into his motor engineering classes.

As the world's biggest carmakers show off their latest models — which can cost the price of a small house to buy — at the motor show this week, Ron has revealed the secrets of building a car for the equivalent price of a couple of family grocery bills in a new book so that more people can make the model he calls the Locost. Ron gives advice on how to raid scrapyards for the bits and pieces you need and how to put them together to make a car in your garage on weekends.

To the mechanically inept, the idea sounds horrifying but Ron says that anybody can build a car, given enough time and patience.

"We have 13-year-olds who come to my classes who have never even seen a welding torch before, never mind make anything like this," he says. "A year later, they own their own sports car, something they would normally only dream about."

Car owners brought up to expect models which come shiny and new from the showroom will find it difficult to imagine a car designed and made in a workshop in Oundle from a motley collection of components. But the heritage of the entrepreneurial mechanic turned carmaker is a long and honourable one. Colin Chapman, the legendary founder of Lotus, started out making his own little two-seaters, epitomised by the cheap and cheerful — and still revered — Lotus Seven.

It is no accident that the Locost looks like a Seven: the cars might be a generation apart but the logic behind both is the same. Ron says: "For a student like my son James, a car is an expense he cannot afford. But he has run the Locost for four years now and it is cheap, reliable and easy to maintain."

Depending on the engine and transmission set, the Locost could reach an 85mph top speed and 50 miles to the gallon. Ron says it is safe, using a tough chassis and conventional brakes, and each model has to pass an MoT test before it is allowed out on the road.

How basic or how sophisticated the Locost becomes is entirely down to ambition and budget: cars as old as an Austin A35 have been cannibalised for gearbox bits, though the most common donor cars are Ford's ubiquitous Escorts



Welding wonder: motor engineering pupils at Oundle School are inspired by the idea of putting together their own cars out of bits and pieces found in scrapyards

and Cortinas. Ron's advice to potential makers is not to bother with the finery normally associated with cars. If you can't afford to paint it, don't; windscreen wiper mechanism an expense? Then don't have a windscreen and buy goggles instead. The idea is to keep the cost at rock bottom, though enthusiasts can elaborate over the

years. James Champion did a paper round to save money for a pretty chrome suspension, and invested in a £15 set of alloy wheels from a scrapyard. He managed to find a windscreen for £250 after trawling through the stalls at the Beaulieu Autojumble. Even now, James's car has no hood.

Meanwhile, Ron's ambition knows no bounds after the success of the Locost. He is planning a new and bigger model which will be reminiscent of the glory days of MG and British sports cars — and this time it could cost as much as £1,000 to build.

BITS YOU NEED

● Engine: Carburettor, starter, water pump, exhaust manifold, gearbox, clutch, rear axle with brake drums, propshaft and universal joints, steering rack, wheels (tyres and nuts), radiator, exhaust system.
● Controls and cables: Steering wheel, clutch, brake, throttle

pedals, clutch, throttle, choke cables, handbrake lever and mounting, dashboard, instrument cluster.
● Electrics: Alternator, battery, complete wiring loom, starter solenoid, ignition coil, distributor, horn, headlights, flasher indicator units, fusebox.
● Extras: seatbelts, fuel filler cap, hoses and clips, fuel tank sender unit, brake light switch.

MOKE SUCCESSOR?

In a world filled with different cars that all look the same, the Bandit shows that individuality can still exist *Andrew Hayes writes.*

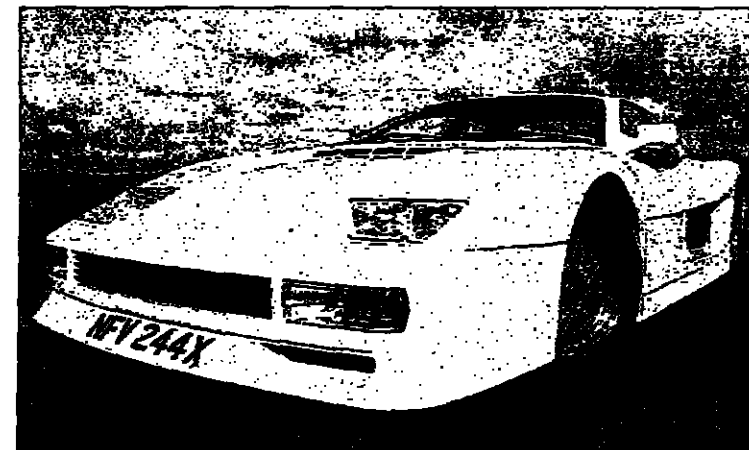
Brothers Chris and Andrew Mynheer, who designed and built the car call it a replacement for the Mini-Moke, year-2000 style. "People have very mixed reactions mainly because the shapes are in odd places, but it seems to have had the desired effect," says Chris.

Few, however, will reject the idea of a modern beach-buggy, containing the 1.4 twin-cam Rover K-series engine, under which lies a spaceframe chassis.

"We've targeted it specifically at certain markets," says Andrew, "one being the holiday hire market abroad."



The Bandit: it could feature in thousands of happy holiday snaps



The Ferrari-based kit car is lighter than the real thing, and fast, too

SUPERCAR FROM SHED

Two men who built a car in a garden shed in their spare time are in line to win a production contract worth almost £2 million from a group of Singapore businessmen, writes *Adam Fresco.*

Vincent Wright and Roy Sellwood, from Colchester, Essex, began making their kit car, resembling a Ferrari Testarossa, in 1991.

Wright says: "We built a workshop, started with a Jaguar V12 engine on the floor and built the car around it. The radiator had to be 45 degrees either side of the engine so the Ferrari was a good shape to base the styling on."

The car is 360kg lighter than a real Testarossa and can reach 60mph in just over five seconds. One of its first buyers is Peter Filby, publisher of *Kit Car* magazine.

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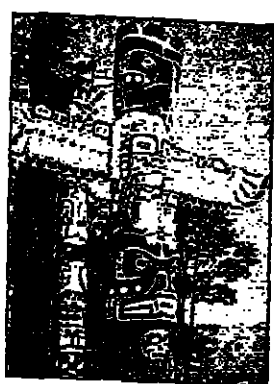
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The best of Canada from the Rockies to Montreal
Pages 18,19

THE TIMES Travel

Why the British are staying away from France
Page 21



The town that tourism forgot

In the shadow of a breathtaking cathedral, bounded by a forgotten river, beats the ancient heart of Gerona: a medieval Jewish ghetto

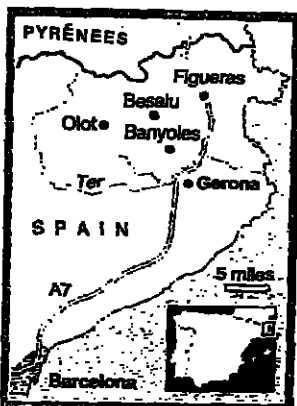
All great or once-great cities have so-berquets: none more so than Gerona, a Catalan gem neglected for the past 200 years. "City of a Thousand Sieges", "Barcelona's little sister", "The City of Split Personality" — modern Gerona has more than its fair share of handles but none tells the whole story.

At the confluence of the Ter and Onya rivers, in a valley surrounded by tumbling hills, Gerona has an eye-popping history and a palpable present-day *ambiente*. The Catalunya Generalitat calls it "a city for the 1990s waiting to explode". This may be so — but for the time being, one of Gerona's greatest attributes is that tourists leave it pretty much alone, even though it lends its name to the nearby charter airport which serves the Costa Brava.

It was not always so. Conquered in turn by the Romans and Moors, Gerona is used to being in the spotlight. Suleiman sacked the city, Pippin the Short overran it, Napoleon played diplomatic volleyball with it. But the adversity that shaped Gerona has rendered it unique.

Driving up the A7 from Barcelona and feeling my way through the spider's web of new roads which encircle the city, I came into town via the Plaza de la Independencia — a pint-sized, colonnaded, neo-classical square — and knew at a glance this city was for me. Behind the square lies the Riu Onyar, which divides the old and new towns. River in name but stagnant in nature, the Onyar slops against its banks like an unloved canal in some unfashionable quarter of Venice. On the old town side, medieval houses of timber, sienna and slate-grey abut the water, while the iron bridges seem to span not only the Onyar but history itself, reluctantly bonding old with new.

I crossed at the Pont de Gomez and, reaching the northern bank, dipped under a stone portal and sidled effortlessly back 800 years into the Call, Gerona's medieval heart. Here, in a ghetto

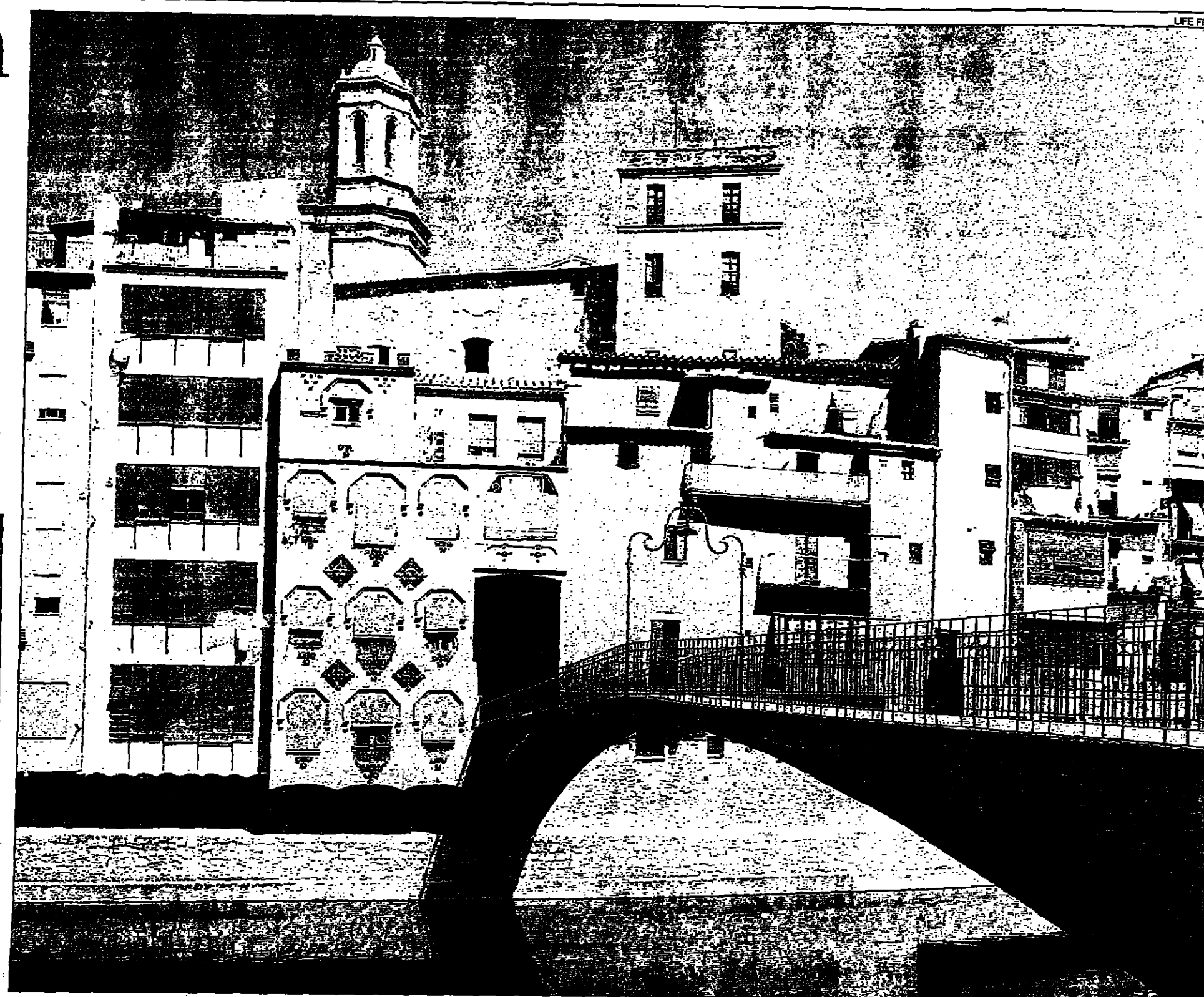


bounded by the river, the Sant Llorenç and the Cathedral, the city's flourishing 12th-century Jews founded the school of mysticism and developed the *Kabbalah*. While the *Torah* (Mosaic law) focuses on what God requires of man, *Kabbalah* uses words, codes and numbers to explore the essence of God himself. Here, along the Calle de la Força, wandered the Call's most famous son, Moses ben Nahman — Nahmanides, a modern prophet of Judaism, his mind absorbed in philosophy, algebra, acrostics and the Almighty.

So disturbing are the intricacies of *Kabbalah* that, by the 17th century, rabbis restricted its study to married men over the age of 40 who were already scholars of *Torah* and *Talmud*. Even today, many Orthodox Jews treat it with suspicion.

Modish boutiques and bars — for let us not forget we are in trendy Catalunya — punctuate the dark streets of the Call, belying its ancient profundity. But Gerona is a university town with a modern appetite for learning. Cycles in alleyways tell you as much and, in the hot siesta hour, the twang of Dylan's *Lay Lady Lay* from an open window on the Carrer Ciutadans confirms it.

Halfway up the steep steps on the Carrer Sant Llorenç, the Centre de Bonastruc Ca Porta is a medieval house in the throes of painstaking reconstruction by the Generalitat. With maps, artefacts and headstones gathered from the old Jewish cemeteries of Catalunya, it



The Pont de Gomez crosses the Onyar river and leads to the Call, the Jewish ghetto that is Gerona's medieval heart, thankfully as yet undiscovered by the tourist hordes

SATURDAY BOOKS

Barclay, Buddy Holly, Elmore Leonard and The Times Bestsellers

THE DIRECTORY PAGES 7-12

aims to tell the story of Gerona's Jews. And if fact occasionally gives way to conjecture, go with it — for the Bonastruc is a great undertaking in a country which even 30 years ago had yet to come to terms with its Jewish past.

Turn left at the top of Llorenç, follow the steep and tortuous paths of the Call and you come to Gerona's Cathedral. This is a structure of superlatives: along with that of Palma de Mallorca, it is remarkable in having a single nave — this one is the widest in Christendom. Started in the 11th century and completed 700 years later, the cathedral effectively

provides a walking tour of the history of church architecture. There are Romanesque cloisters, the medieval nave and 16th-century Museu del Claustre, which now houses most of Gerona's ecclesiastical treasures. Among these are the *Código del Beatus*, a 10th-century illustrated commentary on the Apocalypse, and the 11th-century *Tapis de la Creació* (Tapestry of the Creation).

Overwhelmed? You will be, not least by the view as you leave the cathedral by its southern doors and descend the largest rococo stairway in Europe to the Plaza below. Nearby, the Banys Arabs (Arab Baths) are unmissable, based on a Roman design souped up with Moorish decoration.

While the baths may be unmissable, every traveller knows that nothing is as unmissable as lunch. At El Pou del Call, a charming restaurant in the heart of the Call, I took time off for some *boquerones de Cadacques* (fresh anchovies), a plate of *fideus* (noodles) and a jug of white Catalan wine, so young it almost squeaked.

Afternoons in Gerona hold more pleasures still: walks on the Passeig Arqueològic along the city walls, shopping on the Ramblas de la Libertat, or eating *turrón* ice-cream at Victoria Candel's tea-shop on the Carrer Argenteria. For those with time to spare, excursions to the nearby towns of Banyoles, Olot and Besalu are inefably rewarding.

Yes, perhaps it is fitting that the Jews who helped to civilise these lands and were tortured for their pains, should have the last word. When a group of students asked the great Talmudic scholar and Kabbalist septic Professor Saul Lieberman of the Theological Seminary in New York whether they could study *Kabbalah*, he told them they might only study its history. "It is forbidden to have a course in nonsense," he said, "but the history of nonsense, that is scholarship."

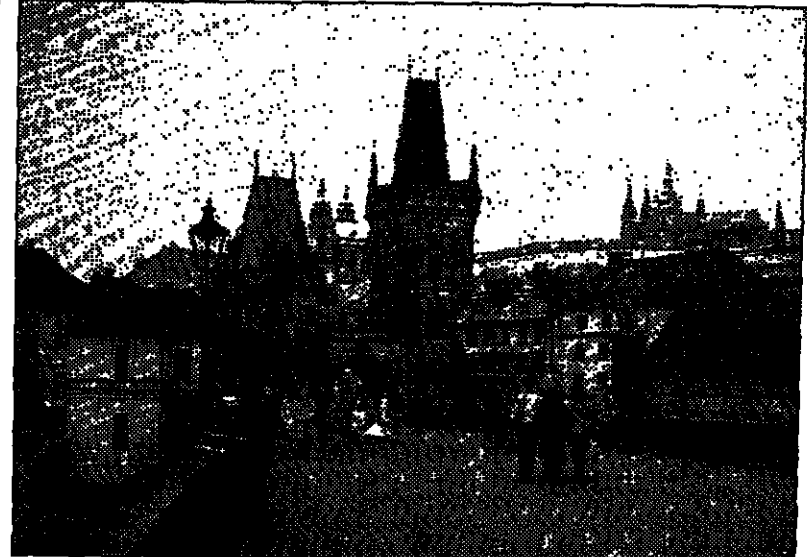
Nonsense or not, to stretch a Kabbalistic theme, add up the pleasures of Gerona and divide by the number of city breaks you allow yourself per year: the equation will come out every time.

JEREMY WAYNE

SAXONY, BOHEMIA AND THE DANUBE

A 14 DAY EXPLORATION OF THE HEART OF EUROPE BY ROAD AND RIVER

For our visit to Middle Europe we have organised an itinerary based on six days of touring, followed by a seven night cruise along the Danube. This is the ideal way to explore Germany, the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary. It allows the opportunity to visit the major cities of Berlin, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Bratislava and Budapest as well



as the lovely countryside of Southern Saxony, the Wachau Valley and the Danube Bend.

Such an itinerary undertaken completely by coach would indeed be a tiring experience. However, by dividing our time between touring and cruising, we are able to offer a more leisurely schedule. The seven day cruise aboard the first class

MS Roussee offers a moving hotel and a most comfortable base. She will moor close to, and in some cases, in the centre of the cities and towns along the river.

Whilst she is sailing along the Danube she affords wonderful views. Perhaps the biggest advantage is that for seven nights of the itinerary you have a permanent base — no packing or unpacking!

THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 London-Berlin Morning departure with British Airways. Drive to the former East German capital of Saxony. Virtually flattened by Allied bombing in WWII, the city has been rebuilt in the spirit of regeneration which is now so prevalent in the former East Germany. Visit the Zwinger Palace, a wonderful collection of Baroque pavilions, galleries and gardens. Later see the Semper Opera House and the ruins of the city's cathedral. Stay overnight at the Hotel Mercure or similar.

DAY 2 Berlin-Potsdam Morning excursion to both East and West Berlin, driving along the Unter den Linden, and past the Reichstag. Charlottenburg Palace and the Brandenburg Gate. Afternoon visit to Potsdam—the Versailles of Prussia. Here amongst the splendour of Frederick the Great's creation we will see the palace of Sans Souci, the Tea House and Castle Cecilienhof, where the Potsdam Treaty was signed by the Allies.

DAY 3 Berlin-Dresden Early start today as we drive to Dresden, the historic capital of Saxony. Virtually flattened by Allied bombing in WWII, the city has been rebuilt in the spirit of regeneration which is now so prevalent in the former East Germany. Visit the Zwinger Palace, a wonderful collection of Baroque pavilions, galleries and gardens. Later see the Semper Opera House and the ruins of the city's cathedral. Stay overnight at the Hotel Mercure or similar.

DAY 4 Dresden-Melissen-Prague Morning departure to medieval Melissen for visits to the Porcelain Museum and Factory. In the afternoon drive through the lovely countryside of Saxony-Switzerland to Prague. Stay 2 nights at the Diplomat Hotel or similar. Dinner in a typical Prague beer cellar restaurant.

DAY 5 Prague Our guided tour of the 'Golden City' will include the magnificent Castle area and St Vitus cathedral. Walk along Golden Lane before driving around the city, referred to by Goethe as 'the jewel in the world's crown'. Afternoon free, perhaps to explore the fascinating Jewish Quarter, or visit some of the excellent museums and galleries.

DAY 6 Prague-Passau Drive through the enchanting Bohemian countryside to the picturesque German city of Passau, situated on

the confluence of the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers. Embark MS Roussee and sail at tea time, through the delightful lush countryside.

DAY 7 Vienna Morning sailing through the scenic Wachau Valley, arriving in Vienna in the late morning. After lunch there will be an optional excursion of Vienna, driving around the Ring and visiting the Old Quarter. Sail in the evening.

DAY 8 Budapest Be on deck as we sail into Budapest, a wonderful site with beautiful views on both sides of both Buda and Pest. An optional excursion will include Gellert Hill, the Matthias Church and the Fisherman's Bastion. Also an optional 'Budapest by Night' tour. Sail at midnight.

DAY 9 Kalocsa Here on the Hungarian Plains (Puszta) we will visit the charming town of Kalocsa. There will be an optional excursion to this area which is rich in folklore and famous for its horses and riding skills.

DAY 10 Budapest-Estergom There will be a brief stop at Budapest for those who wish to take the optional excursion overland to Estergom by way of the picturesque town of Szentendre. Or stay on board and cruise to Estergom, arriving in the early afternoon.

DAY 11 Bratislava Morning in the capital of Slovakia — optional walking tour available. Sail at lunch time back to Vienna. There will be the opportunity to join an optional Vienna music concert in Schonbrunn Palace. Sail at midnight.

DAY 12 Durnstein Arrive in the morning. Join an optional excursion to Melk Abbey and the beautiful wine growing countryside of the Wachau Valley. Sail at lunch time.

DAY 13 Passau Arrive in the morning and disembark after breakfast. Optional walking tour of Passau. Later drive to the famous place of pilgrimage at Althof for lunch at the delightful Hotel Post. Later drive to the city of Munich for an overnight stay at the Hotel Dorint or similar. Farewell dinner in Munich.

DAY 14 Munich-London (Heathrow) Late morning departure with British Airways to London.

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Danube deck	2 beds	£1739	£1789
Frontier Suite		£2023	£2073
Europe deck	Single	£1850	£1890
Danube deck	Single	£1950	£1990

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Prices include: Economy class air travel London-Berlin and Munich-London, 6 nights first class hotel accommodation, breakfast daily at hotels, dinner on days 1,3,4 & 13, full board on days 6 to 13, transportation by first class coach, 7 nights aboard the MS Roussee, port taxes, excursions on days 2,3,4,5,6 & 13, UK departure tax, portage, local guides, Cruise Director.
Not included: Travel insurance, airport tax, optional excursions from the MS Roussee (details of shore excursions available on request).

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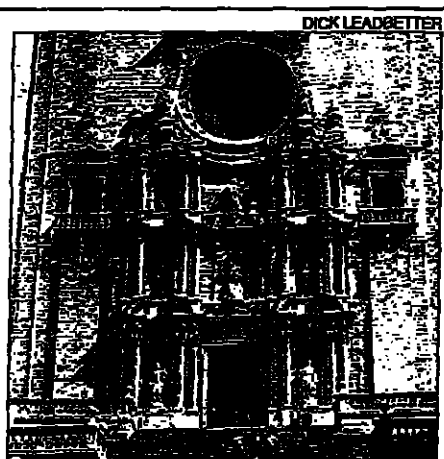
GERONA FACT FILE

■ GETTING THERE: By charter to Gerona with Avro (0181-715 0000), May-Oct from £89; to Barcelona with Debonair (0500 146200) from £47 one way; EasyJet (0990 292029) from £49 one way; or British Airways (0345 22211), Apex fares from £185 until end of Oct; then train to city centre with direct connections to Gerona. Journey time from airport: about 1½ hours.

■ CAR HIRE: Only necessary if you want to tour the countryside. Book in the UK with Holiday Autos (0990 300400) or Hertz (0990 996699), about £140 per week inclusive; or in Gerona, at the train station, Hertz (00 34 72 672801).

■ Accommodation: Gerona does not have the hotels it deserves. The functional three-star Ullonia on Avda Jaume I (00 34 72 203850) in the new town is perfectly comfortable (doubles from £40 plus 7 per cent tax), but for something with *ambiente* in the interesting old town, the two-star Hostal Belmirall on Calle Belmirall 3 (00 34 72 204009) is a guest house with bags of charm (doubles from £35 including breakfast and tax).

■ RESTAURANTS: El Pou de Call (Carrer de la Força 14) is delightful and has a *menu del dia* at £7.50. La Penya (Carrer Nou del Teatre 3) offers the same and is the locals' choice. At the north end of town, El Celler de Can Roca (Ctra Taiala 40) has a Michelin rosette (£25 per person).



Gerona's magnificent cathedral

■ DON'T MISS: The Cathedral and Museu (Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-2pm and 4-6pm); Centre de Bonastruc Ca Porta (Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-6pm); Banys Arabs (Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-2pm); Museu Arqueològic de San Pere de Galligants (Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-1pm and 4-30-7pm).

■ BOOKS TO READ: Sarah Anderson of the Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends *Voices of the Old Sea* by Norman Lewis (Picador, £5.99, ISBN 0 33034 561 3), *Homage to Catalonia* by George Orwell (Penguin, £6.99, ISBN 0 14018 231 4), *Rough Guide to Barcelona and Catalunya* by Jules Brown (£8.99, ISBN 1 85828 106 7).

International skiing: Part three of Doug Sager's round-up of the resorts features the pick of Switzerland

Unbeatable, yes. Affordable, maybe

THE NATION that invented the winter holiday is now a no-go area in the minds of most British skiers. Both ski guidebooks and tour operators' brochures have drastically cut back their Swiss pages. But the notion that Switzerland is only for the super-rich is ridiculous.

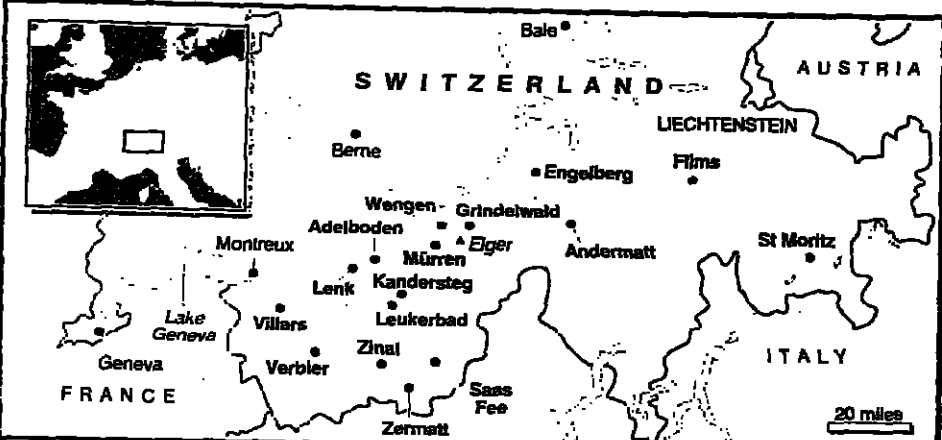
That Switzerland is expensive is unarguable. But Swiss medical services, routine helicopter rescues off the pistes, not to mention communications, banking and hotel infrastructure, are all of a far higher standard than elsewhere in the Alps.

This week sterling was averaging a 14 per cent improvement over the Swiss franc from a year ago. And there are signs that Swiss indifference to the British market is over.

Switzerland Tourism (0171-734 1921), in collaboration with Swissair and local

tourism bodies, is funding free ski pass and free ski week offers as well as a voucher booklet for dining and shopping bargains. As of January, Switzerland Tourism is privatising its travel service, which will open as the Switzerland Travel Centre (0171-734 4578).

Swiss resorts themselves are attempting to overcome their mercenary image. Determined to ditch its title as "the most expensive ski pass in Europe", Verbier has dramatically dropped its prices. A six-day ski pass in Verbier this winter will cost SFr282 (£141) instead of SFr297, a saving of £29 per week over last year's cost. All other top Swiss resorts, except Crans Montana, kept ski pass prices at last year's Swiss franc level, which means savings in sterling. And Zermatt is allowing children under the age of ten to ski for free.



CLASSIC RESORTS

WINTER holidays were invented in St Moritz in 1864. And even today no resort in the world comes close to St Moritz for high-season high jinks. No resort has more grand old hotels in the four and five-star category. Polo and horse racing, even golf, on ice have been copied by other resorts. But the Gour-

met Festival and the bone-shattering Cresta Run remain unique, as does St Moritz's "champagne" climate.

Zermatt's glacier skiing, the highest in the Alps for beginners, leads on to Italy, all the way down to Cervinia, with payment of a hefty surcharge. But it is the looming Matterhorn and Zermatt's unparalleled

mountain restaurants which fill the village's car-free lanes to capacity each winter with visitors who simply refuse to ski anywhere else, at any price.

Saas Fee's pearly glaciers hanging over snow-choked streets lined with wooden barns on stone stilts create an awe-inspiring backdrop to what has become Switzerland's liveliest snowboarding scene and skiing which is blessed with one of the most advanced lift systems in the Alps.

CIRCUSES

ON ITS OWN, Switzerland cannot compete in the top league of interlinked ski circus networks. But the Portes du Soleil ski pass region shared with France is the fourth largest in the Alps and has no better headquarters than modestly priced Champéry, an easy 90-minute drive from Geneva airport.

Switzerland's biggest skiing area, the 400km of pistes of the Four Valleys centred in Verbier, is the focus of the most varied and exciting lift-accessed off-piste skiing in the Alps, not to mention a wealth of reasonably priced self-catering and chalet accommodation.

Little known to British skiers is the 225km expanse of the White Arena spread around the sunny cliff bands of Flims, Waldhaus and Laax in eastern Switzerland. This is an intermediate skiing paradise, with an excellent snow record and charming old-fashioned hotels.

Two of Switzerland's most evocative car-free villages, Wengen and its central children's playground and ski slope and chocolate-box chalet Mürren, are complemented by the true grit of ski mountaineering in Grindelwald, dominated by the cold face of the Eiger.

These delightful villages make up the 183km Jungfrau region, connected by cog-wheel railway rising to the highest train depot in Europe (at 3,454m), from which skiers have the option of descending Europe's longest glacier, the Aletsch.

FAMILY VALUES

ADELBODEN and Lenk, two typical Bernese Oberland villages without a fur



Zermatt, with the highest glacier skiing in the Alps for beginners, attracts loyal visitors who refuse to ski elsewhere

coat between them, share a modestly extensive (166km) skiing network served by recently upgraded lifts, which is ideally suited to all-family skiing. The only drawback of the area is that the skiing rises little above 2,000m, making for un-certain snow conditions in bad winters.

Andermatt is a "snow hole", reaping storms from three directions and permitting untracked itineraries off every side of the 3,000m Gemsstock.

It is not car-free but there are more children — and cows — in Andermatt's snow-covered streets than motor vehicles, yet the resort is not represented in any tour operator's brochure.

Engelberg can guarantee snow on its 3,000m glacier and, when conditions are right, the Laub off-piste powderfields promise some of the least-crowded deep-

snow skiing in the Alps. The village is not quaint, but features a number of old-fashioned hotels with huge rooms and prices below the Swiss norm.

The world's only rotating cable car offers spectacular views and is a massive hit with children, as is Engelberg's night-time sledding.

Villars has the convenience of being less than 90 minutes from Geneva airport by car and the family attractions of ample easy skiing tied in to the nearby glacier runs at Diablerets.

Rail connections to Montreux and Lake Geneva allow non-skiers to take day-trips to the Swiss Riviera. Furthermore, parents can be assured that the Vaudoise Alps appeal to few helicopter ski-racer types, and children can be left to make their own way around Villars's less than precipitous slopes in safety.

HIDEAWAYS

KANDERSTEG is a retreat from the real world. The Swiss consider anyone from the canton of Bern to be a little slow, but the Bernese Oberlanders who populate Kandersteg have stopped the clock. In addition to grand old hotels from the 19th century, there are conscientiously restored wooden inns from even earlier days where plastic, alloy metals and any foodstuffs not produced locally are banned from the premises.

Leukerbad is an old spa town where the spa complex has been recently modernised and where the 30-room five-star Sources des Alpes provides the ultimate in understated elegance, so far unknown to the British market and unrepresented by any tour operator. Skiing is limited on the piste but the off-piste itineraries really are

the stuff of legend. And Zinal is the Verbier of tomorrow. Somehow discovered by Club Med, this hamlet, drowned in snow at the dead end of a lonesome drive up from the Rhone Valley, is served by only one cable car and seven surface lifts. Club Med says that Zinal is for infants and small children, but older skiers will find it an untouched powder playground too.

SWISS FACTS

TOUR OPERATORS

■ Britain's biggest tour operators — with the exception of Swiss-owned Inghams (0181-780 4444) which goes to 13 Swiss resorts — have either abandoned Switzerland to the specialists, as in the case of Airtours and First Choice, or limited their exposure. Crystal (0181-399 5344) and Thomson (0990 329 329) both go to just three Swiss resorts; Neilson (0113-239 4555) only to Verbier.

■ Made to Measure (01243 533333) will prepare holiday packages to 31 Swiss resorts on an à la carte basis.

■ Swiss Travel Service (01992 456123) offers scheduled flights to 16 Swiss resorts.

■ Kuoni (01306 742500) is a worldwide Swiss travel company with holidays in 16 Swiss resorts.

■ Headwater (01606 48699) is a cross-country specialist which this year adds Kandersteg to its brochure.

■ Ski Esprit (01252 616789) offers non-smoking chalets with a money-back childminding guarantee in Verbier.

■ Ski Verbier (0171-738 0878) has some of the highest standards of cuisine and best luxury chalets in Verbier.

■ Flexiski (0171-352 0044) has the best choice of hotels and/or chalets for flexible breaks in Verbier.

■ Club Med (0171-225 1066) features its holidays in St Moritz, Villars, Zinal and five other Swiss locations.

■ Powder Byrne (0181-871 3300) maintains a permanent base in Grindelwald and employs Switzerland's top-rated mountain guides in its five resorts.

■ The Ski Company (0171-730 5551) last year expanded its luxury chalets to include a penthouse flat in Klosters.

TOURIST INFORMATION

■ The Swiss are changing their telephone numbers. The following tourist offices will change to the new numbers below in November:

Adelboden 33 673 8080;
Crans Montana 27 485 0404; Kandersteg 33 675 2233; Lenk 33 733 3131;
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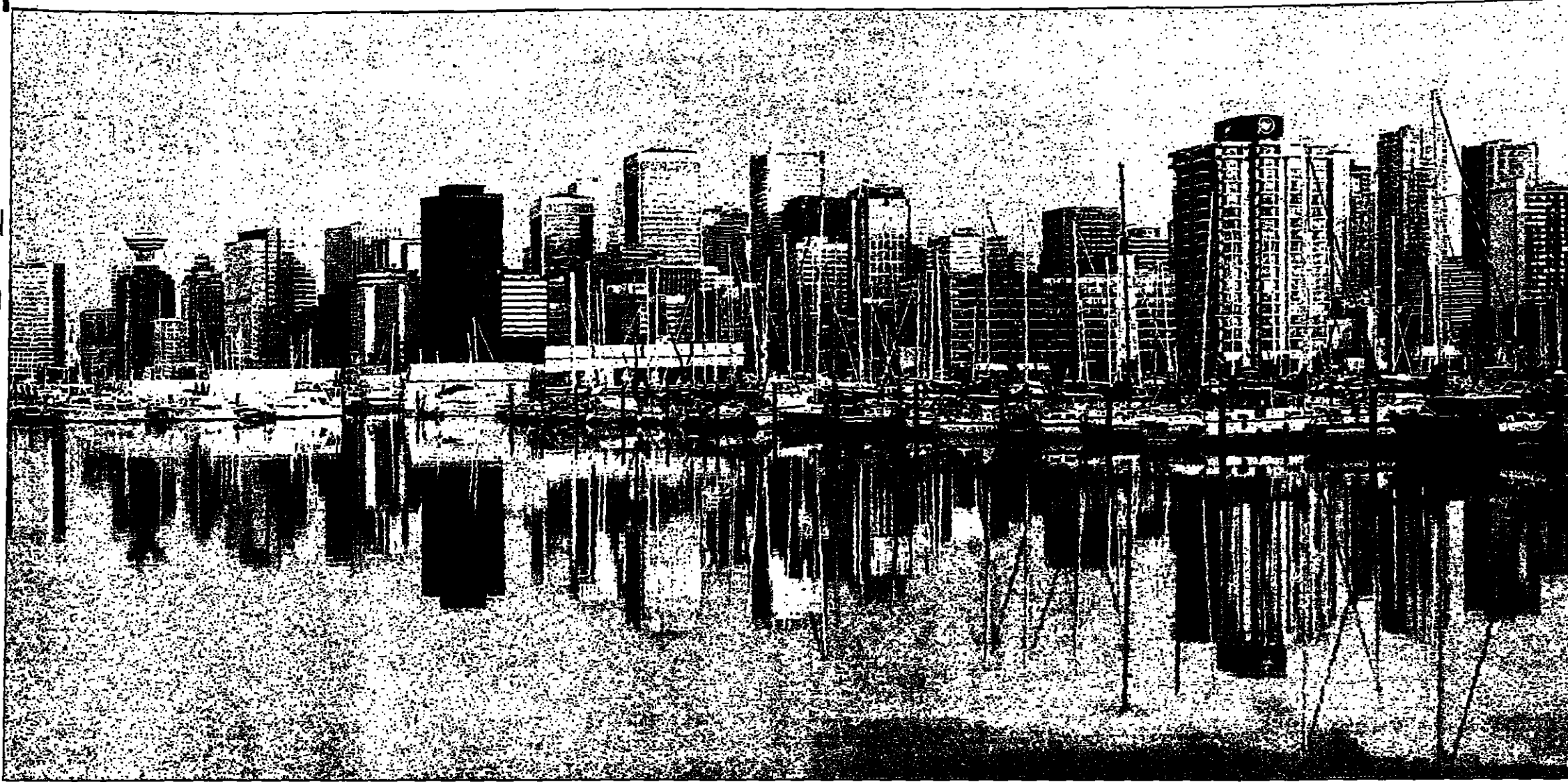
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Canada: Vancouver's skyline provides a dramatic backdrop to its harbour, the source of its development and wealth. The wilderness, however, with skiing, climbing and white-water rafting, is not far away

A map of Western Canada, specifically focusing on British Columbia and Alberta. The Rocky Mountains are shown as a prominent feature running diagonally across the top. Major cities and locations are marked with dots and labeled: Vancouver, Seattle, Whistler, Yoho Valley, Lake Louise, Banff, and Calgary. The Pacific Ocean is labeled to the west. An inset map in the top right corner shows the location of the study area within the context of North America, with a box indicating the specific region shown in the main map. A scale bar at the bottom right indicates 100 miles. The text 'UNITED STATES' is visible at the bottom.

Totem pole in Vancouver

KATE PULLINGER
● The author was a guest of British Airways and Avis provided a car.

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■ **FLIGHTS:** British Airways (0345 222747) fly direct daily from London Heathrow to Vancouver. Economy fares range from £439 to £519 for flights booked 21 days in advance for a minimum of seven nights. Air Canada (0990 247 226) also has direct flights daily from London to Vancouver; fares range from £349 to £489 for flights booked seven days in advance, travelling midweek.

■ **PACKAGES:** Trailfinders (0171-937 5400) do tailor-made holidays that include flights, hotels and car hire, starting at £672 per person and £931 for two people for one week. Going Places (0181-889 0849) offers packages through British Airways, flights and four-star accommodation for seven nights, for £690. Travel Pack (0990 747 101) have a three-night city break, including airfare, half-day sightseeing in Vancouver, full-day excursion to Victoria, from £579 per person.

■ **CAR RENTAL:** the author was supplied a car courtesy of Avis (0990 900500). Hire for a Group B car for one week starts at £169 plus 14 per cent local tax. All major car-hire firms operate out of Vancouver airport — public transport is not one of the city's strong points.

■ **HOTELS:** for accommodation downtown at the top of the market try either the Four Seasons (00 1 604 689 9333) or the Hyatt Regency (00 1 604 683 1234); more economical is the Best Western Chateau Granville (00 1 604 669 7070).

■ **RESTAURANTS:** The Naam, 24-hour gourmet wholefood, West 4th St. and McDonald Bo Kung, Chinese, Main and 14th. Samsons, on Haro and Denman, has West Coast cuisine, wonderful Martinis. Typical price for a substantial meal, with drinks, is about \$20 (£10) per person.

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... but the energetic get their snowshoes on and head for the icy wilderness, or live it up in Montreal



Snowmobiling, although banned from Canada's national parks as a noisy and antisocial pastime, is nonetheless a truly exhilarating experience

Everything but the skis

In Calgary it was the coldest day of the winter — minus 40 something — and the traffic belched white clouds of vapour into the freezing sunshine. As an old Canada hand, I reassured my companions that it can sometimes, paradoxically, be much warmer up in the mountains than down on the prairie.

It can be but it wasn't. In Banff the locals were speculating when it had last been so cold — and when Canadians start apologising for the weather, you know it really must be something exceptional.

We had been invited to the Rockies to try alternatives to skiing. There are those, it seems, although I find it hard to believe, whose experiences have put them off skiing. Others may feel that at their time of life, it is too late to start learning. They want to experience the great outdoors but they want something safer and less demanding.

That first morning, the great outdoors seemed rather less appealing than the warmth and luxury of the Banff Springs Hotel. But the sun was brilliant, the skies cloudless and the air still and dry, and once we were wrapped in layers of warm clothing it was all quite exhilarating.

Of the various alternatives we could sample during the week, top of most people's list

was snowshoeing, generally considered to be the only activity which offered a serious challenge to skiing. Snowshoes were invented by the Eskimos — or, as we are now supposed to call them, the Inuits — and are a sort of cross between a wicker basket and an outside tennis racket. Their function is to allow the wearer to tramp across the surface of steep, uncompacted snow in which he would otherwise be floundering up to his chest. An hour or so's drive up the Trans-Canada Highway took us to the Continental Divide, which at this point forms the border between Alberta and British Columbia. East of it the rivers flow into Hudson Bay, west of it into the Pacific. We were met by a guide from White

Mountain Adventures who turned out to be a qualified zoologist, adept at pointing out the trails of moose, elk, lynx, wolves, wolverines and various other creatures on their winter journeys through the forest.

Although they seem cumbersome at first, snowshoes are very easy to get used to and require surprisingly little effort, even when climbing quite steep slopes. Whereas cross-country skis ideally require open country or cleared trails, snowshoes allow the wearer to travel into dense woods and across the roughest terrain.

A magical tramp through great silent stands of conifers took us to the edge of a cliff overlooking a huge frozen waterfall. Sculpted for half the year into great walls and columns of ice, it is a popular weekend attraction for climbers with picks and crampons. That, I am glad to say, was not on our itinerary. We picked up the afternoon sunshine in the middle of a small lake and if time had permitted, would gladly have gone further.

Snowmobiling, in contrast, is an altogether noisier activity considered by some to be antisocial and environmentally unfriendly. It is banned from all the national parks, which occupy a large area of this part of the

Rockies, so we had to travel to remote Beaverfoot Lodge in the Yoho Valley, from where Challenge Enterprises operates guided tours along a complex of forest trails.

The snowmobile is best described as a motorcycle on skis instead of wheels, the main control being a throttle mounted on the handlebars, although there are brakes for emergency use. The engine is not only noisy but surprisingly powerful and needs a bit of getting used to. But once we were off, bumping along the winding, rutted trails, it was — environmentally incorrect or not — enormous fun.

Dog sledding is something one tends to associate with the wild years of the Yukon Gold Rush immortalised in the poems of Robert Service.



Snowshoes are easy to use

or with heroic polar explorers trudging across the endless, implacable ice. Nowadays it is a popular sport in parts of North America, with kennels maintained like racing stables and big races attracting sponsorship and prizes.

We were simply passengers, huddled in the bottom of the sledges while our drivers, from Mountain Mushers, rode behind us shouting abuse and encouragement at their canine teams. A brisk half-hour trip was quite enough on this occasion, although in kinder weather a longer journey might appeal.

For our introduction to the curious sport of ice fishing we trudged out into the middle of a particularly beautiful lake, ringed by mountains, where a temporary hut had been erected and where our instructor, Jeff Perodeau, produced a large drill with which he proceeded to bore a series of holes in the ice. Each allotted a hole, all we had to do was to bait the hook, drop the weighted line through the ice and gently reel it up and down. Between us we caught a couple of dozen trout.

After finally being allowed to ski on the last day at Lake Louise — several hours of intensive piste-bashing on superbly groomed slopes — we decided to forgo two further offers of skating and sleigh riding. But it had been a thoroughly enjoyable week.

Though they may lack the ambience of the Alps, the Canadian Rockies are majestically beautiful and, thanks to the relative weakness of the dollar, offer unbeatable value for money. At a mountain restaurant above Lake Louise, a splendidly varied self-serve hot and cold buffet — as many helpings as you fancied — cost just \$12 (£6). Eat your heart out, Europe.

JOHN YOUNG

The author was a guest of the Canadian Tourist Office, Canadian Pacific Hotels and the Banff/Lake Louise Tourism Bureau

FESTIVE SHOPPING:

Where can you find every Christmas present you need? Across the Atlantic, of course. Bales Tours (01306 876867) suggests a Saturday-to-Wednesday spree in Toronto between now and December 14 for £385, including B&B at the Metropolitan Hotel. The city's Eaton Centre has 320 shops under one huge roof including Eaton's, Toronto's answer to Harrods.

Northwest Airlines (01424 224 400) claims that the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, with 400 shops under one roof and a seven-acre Camp Snoopy theme park with 21 rides is the greatest. Two adults sharing pay £319 each (or with four sharing a jumbo-sized room with two queen-sized beds, £289 per person) for two nights' hotel accommodation and flights between Gatwick and Minneapolis St Paul. There are also departures from Glasgow (£354) and Belfast, Guernsey and Jersey (£399).

YUKON BREAK: A new Alaska B&B pass from Premier Holidays (01787 884031) allows travellers to stay in family homes in some of the most remote regions of Alaska

CANADA TIPS

and the Canadian Yukon. Passes are available for 7, 14 and 21 nights, costing £669, £1,239 and £1,749 per person for car hire and B&B, between mid-May and mid-September. Flights to Anchorage can be arranged for around £750.

SKI OFFERS: A long season, vast skiing areas, good snow and extensive children's facilities are the advantages of skiing in Canada. Low temperatures and lack of accommodation near the slopes are the disadvantages. To cope with increasing demand, Ski Thomson (0990 329 329) is introducing charter flights starting on December 21 to Calgary, with a week at the Swiss Village in Banff costing from £329 for flights and room only, four sharing. A week's skiing in the Canadian Rockies, staying at the Banff Springs Hotel, starts at £515. Ski and boot hire is from £37 a week (performance equipment £75); three days' lessons of four hours each are £65, with lift passes from £110 for adults, £96 for children. A number of family offers are also available.

JILL CRAWSHAW

Where pleasure became a fine art

You don't go to Montreal for a quiet weekend. The year in North America's biggest French-speaking city is packed with an endless parade of fireworks, music, circus, motor racing and international film festivals.

In winter, the St Lawrence River fills with skaters along the old port and the area is turned over to a massive ice fiesta while the city's magnificent churches and public buildings stage recitals, comedy shows and exhibitions. Its streets and shopping arcades, forming a 29km long subterranean sanctuary from the freezing winter, glitter with Paris fashions, delicatessens and the coats of its still-thriving fur trade. And with over 5,000 bars and night clubs and an eclectic range of restaurants, Montreal is one of the last places to hide under the duvet with a good book and a mug of cocoa.

The best way to get to know the place on a three-day trip is to head for Dorchester Square, a pleasant tree-lined piazza, where the main tourist information centre is located. Pick up *Old Montreal: A Walking Tour*. The simple guide takes you on either a two-hour or three-and-a-half hour stroll through the historic areas of a city founded on the St Lawrence River in 1664 by French colonists.

The old port, once a decaying riverfront, was transformed during the 1970s into Montreal's cultural centre. Along networks of cobbled streets lined with street entertainers, the visitor can pop into quiet galleries and curio shops or relax in the sun, shine at a noisy open-air café sniffing the Gauloises and sipping a beer.

The amble takes you past the delightful Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours Chapel at 400 Rue Saint-Paul east. The sailor's chapel, built in 1771, has model ships donated by rescued seamen hanging from the nave. From the smaller chapel, reached by steep spiral stairs, you can

FACT FILE

■ Crystal Cities (0181-390 9900) offers weekend breaks, including two nights at the four-star Queen Elizabeth Hotel, from £365 per person.
■ Quebec Tourism: 0171-930 9742.
■ Reading: *New Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English* by Margaret Atwood (OUP, £15, ISBN 0 19541 025 4). *In the Skin of a Lion* by Michael Ondaatje (Pan, £5.99, ISBN 0 33030 183 7). *Canada the Rough Guide* (E10.99, ISBN 1 8528 130 X). *Ski Trails in the Canadian Rockies* (Rocky Mountain Books, £8.95, ISBN 0 92110 213 5).

trip from the centre to the former Olympic village where a huge area has been transformed into the world's second-largest botanical gardens after New.

The gardens have drawn on designs from 30 countries and can be reached on foot or on a shuttle that meanders past flower beds, ponds and Japanese gardens complete with waterfalls, lakes, little bridges and a daily tea ceremony. Visitors were sitting in the sunshine, sipping wine and eating packed sushi lunches while oriental drummers beat out ancient rhythms.

Eating out in Montreal is bewildering so I cheated and turned to *The Gazette*, Montreal's English newspaper, where there was a daily restaurant review.

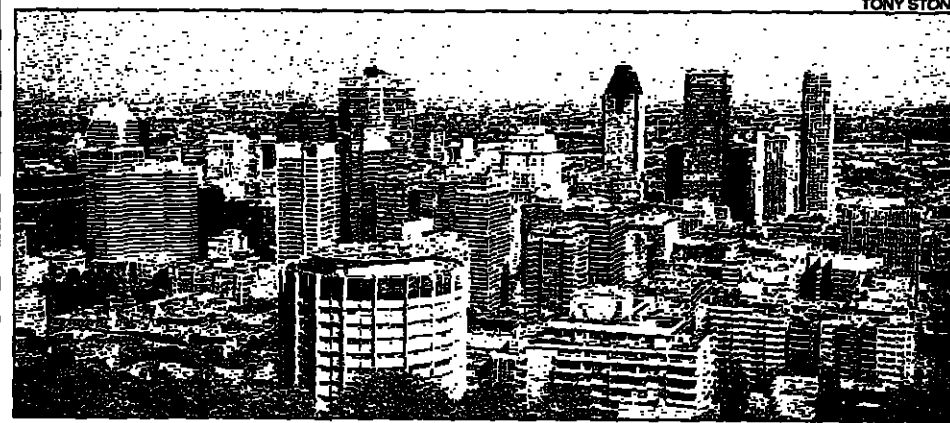
The Ferreira Trattoria, a Portuguese eatery, at 1446 Peel Street, was given the thumbs up so I tried its giant seafood stew with coriander, garlic and wine in a clay pot. Its price is average for a smartish Montreal restaurant, at about £35 for two, but that's without wine or service charge — and wine can be expensive.

Those seeking a more humble but not less adventurous meal might prefer Dunn's, a Jewish diner in the downtown shopping area, which is open 24 hours. Dunn's, and its nearby rival Ben's, are an abiding childhood memory of Lily, my Quebecois sister-in-law. The staff at Dunn's serve giant, smoked-meat sandwiches and cheesecakes so rich that they are known locally as "heart attacks". A meal costs just £4.50.

Along Crescent Street there are some of the best bars and nightspots in Montreal. The St Winston Churchill Pub, like many in the area, has a happy hour. Locals spill on to the terraces for conversation late into the night.

NICK NUTTALL

The author was a guest of Crystal Cities



Montreal, as well as being a financial and cultural centre, is also an open-air gallery

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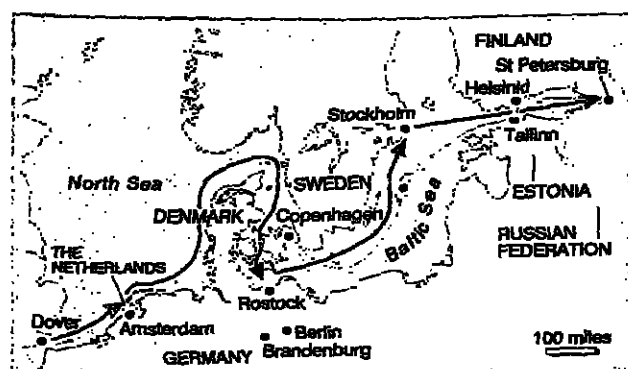
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Cruising: From ship to shore, a trip on the *Royal Viking Sun* was a surprising and unparalleled delight

Please captain, can I have some more?



The *Royal Viking Sun* is the ship which struck a reef in Egypt last spring. Judging by the way I was treated on one of the first cruises since being repaired, they seem to be doing everything possible to assure you it won't happen again.

I thought it was going to be like getting on an aeroplane, with all the hassle, discomfort and sweat involved in queuing to get your tickets processed — and lifting those cases on to the scale. Nothing like it. But we were welcomed into the almost empty terminal, complete with chandeliers, gilded staircase and smooth-as-silk lifts, and moments later we were already aboard. "Care for afternoon tea, sir? We're serving it, with finger sandwiches, in the Norway lounge," said an attentive attendant.

And so it began — a trip of 14 days, visiting seven countries, seemingly without moving. Such a cruise is like staying at a top luxury hotel where everything is done for you — including the travelling. Who wants the bother of getting on and off trains and aeroplanes, if you can stay in a hotel that takes you from place to place while you sleep?

This was my first cruise and I had to learn about the philosophy of being aloof. The passenger may always be right, but you have to trust them, the crew that is, to be right, too.

I have stayed in some of the finest hotels in the world and have always met someone with some complaint — because, I suspect, if you pay the sort of money charged for a room at, say, the Beau Rivage (my favourite land-based watering hole) in Lausanne, you're entitled to find something wrong. At the end of this cruise, we were all handed evaluation questionnaires. Comparing notes with others on board, few of us found very much to complain about, apart from a missing good-night chocolate or a bathrobe which took a bit longer to turn up than one might have hoped.

Actually, they don't allow

you to have reason to complain. One morning, I thought my grapefruit juice was a little sour. The ship could have struck another reef for all the distress expressed by — and apologies received from — one of my waiters (two per table).

A *Berlitz Guide* lists the *Royal Viking Sun* as the finest ship afloat: it has earned this accolade for the past eight years, ever since the film star James Stewart presided at its casting off. And it is easy to see why. No luxury escapes attention.

You want a bottle of champagne with your breakfast? Just tell them precisely what time and it will arrive duly chilled. Caviar with every meal? Well, of course. You'll pay extra for the champagne (and all other alcoholic drinks) but not the caviar. Any more than you pay extra for most of the amenities on board — from the fully-equipped gymnasium to the laundrette.

The dining room is 110 yards long, but eating is no sprint: every meal is a multi-course banquet. Then there's the library, the casino, the plush cinema showing different films three times a day, the Stella Polaris Lounge, which gives a 180-degree panorama of the seascape outside, the Garden Room buffet, the select (as if, when a holiday could cost you £6,000 or more each, everything isn't select) Venetian Italian restaurant, two swimming pools, the health club, the deck tennis courts and the Norway Lounge, where every night there is either a floorshow to make Las Vegas producers blush or a classical concert or a comedian ready to make the most sour-faced smile.

The ship has its own television station. There is a beautifully-produced daily magazine, *The Skald*, and the *Royal Viking Sun Times*, to keep you abreast of what is going on in the world — with a surprising and gratifying emphasis on British news.

There is, of course, also a hairdressing salon (you pay to use that) and a hospital with two intensive-care beds (here, your insurance com-

pany pays and if you didn't take insurance, you deserve the heart attack).

Perhaps the most interesting feature of cruising is the type of people — well-heeled, of course, middle-aged to older, rich, and mostly American (more than 400 of them out of the 600 or so on board). Well, what did you expect? You immediately recognised the new cruisers. They are the folks with ruddy complexions and large stomachs but otherwise in rude health.

Regulars are the party ones with what Julius Caesar would have called the lean and hungry look. They are bound to be — because they have gone through a starvation regime in preparation for the two-week binge they know is coming.

In fact, you could use the whole time doing nothing but eating — without spending a penny more than the not-too-small fortune a cruise actually costs. Try this sort of regimen for size and see if you could survive it. Twenty-four hour cabin service, which means that if you can't get to sleep at dawn, there's absolutely no reason why you don't order a three-course meal to send you off at 4am. Breakfast

from 6.30 to 9am in the dining room (cereals, fry-ups, waffles, scrambled eggs, pancakes, juices, smoked haddock, kippers — take your choice, or order the lot) but you can always ask cabin service to send a smoked salmon snack if you can't wait to get to your table (you could also take it with you when you go ashore for a little walk. And after you leave the main restaurant, the Garden Room on the eleventh floor (sorry, deck) would be happy to fit you up with a soft buffet.

At that point, it would be advisable to take a walk around deck (four laps to the mile) which is good enough reason to feel entitled to sample the late riser's breakfast (more snacks, juices, rolls) in the Midnight Sun Lounge. That should keep you occupied until lunch, unless, in the meantime, you want a hot dog or hamburger from the swimming pool snack bar — a useful place, since it is only a couple of steps back to the Garden Room for the next buffet.

Nobody would then object to your having a "real" lunch in the dining room, with something like 26 different dishes to choose from — if you don't fancy the whole lot, that is.

Lunch finishes, inconveniently, at 2.30pm, which, unfortunately, means waiting an hour and half before afternoon tea — although the bar could fit you up with a snack if you haven't the energy to crawl to your cabin and sit on your own private veranda, watching the waves go by. (My wife was worried about being seasick, but did not need the pills she brought. Stabilisers work.)

Afternoon tea, with enough pastries to guarantee a place in the intensive-care wing, is a nice, leisurely way of preparing for dinner soon after seven — with a choice of a mere 14 courses. Time for another walk round deck, which means you can then settle down for a drink and

some nuts while you watch the evening show, which finishes in time to dance afterwards or go to one of the bars or perhaps the library or the "gentleman's club" for a snifter in readiness for the late-night buffet.

The excursions prove useful because you have to get out and walk. Ours was not a typical cruise. On some, you can be in mid-ocean for days on end. We only had four days at sea, spread throughout the cruise. Usually, we sailed at night or in mid-afternoon. So on this cruise, there was time in Berlin to drive up the Unter den Linden and promenade around the Brandenburg Gate before taking off for the Olympic Stadium, and, later in the first week, to see just how beautiful Stockholm can be in summer.

Our ship always docked at a harbour. At every port of call — Amsterdam, Rostock in Germany, Stockholm, St Petersburg, Helsinki, Tallinn in Estonia, the island of Gotland (Sweden) and finally Copenhagen — there was a free shuttle service to take people into town.

The excursions, though, could be quite expensive. More than £200 (£130 each) for a day in Berlin, including a two-and-a-half hour, first-class train ride in both directions from Rostock (but don't worry, the hostesses provided by the ship come round with sandwiches) and more than £150 (£100) for a day in St Petersburg.

Except for the man in Berlin (one Herr Reinhardt, who seemed to be saying that he had ways of keeping us in order) the guides were superb and the one in St Petersburg achieved the impossible by managing to give a fairly good look at the Hermitage in most of its gilded glory, in just three hours. We left having seen the Rembrandts, the Impressionists, the throne of

Nicholas II, sculptures by Michelangelo, and the magnificence of what used to be the Winter Palace. We did not go totally unsatisfied. My wife is still eating herself up for missing an opportunity to see a performance by the stars of the Kirov Ballet at Catherine the Great's private Hermitage theatre.

And so it went on — for all the 14 days; the best attention, the fullest consideration. Tips are taken care of by the company, unless you feel you want to give something extra. I don't think I ever felt happier handing over the envelopes with a few words of gratitude and a selection of dollars to the waiters and cabin stewards.

Without doubt, this was the finest hotel I have ever stayed in. And you know, when I walked round the swimming pool, I could swear the place was moving. But, then it could have been something I ate.

MICHAEL FREEDLAND

● The author was on the *Royal Viking Sun* as a guest of Cunard.

The Nevsky cathedral in Tallinn, Estonia is one of the magnificent places to visit on a cruise on the *Royal Viking Sun*. The ship spends more time in port than at sea

SUN SAILING FILE

■ **CRUISES:** The *Royal Viking Sun* has cruises throughout the year. The *Jewels of the Baltic Cruise* in July 1996 cost between £3,475 per person for an inside cabin and £13,250 per person in the owner's suite (14 nights on board). The 1997 world cruise is sold out. Bookings from travel agents or Cunard Line Ltd, Southampton, 01703 716500.

■ **FACILITIES:** The ship is registered in the Bahamas. Language on board is English and the dollar will buy anything. They also take banknotes, travellers' cheques, credit cards and local currencies.

■ **DRESS:** On the two-week cruise dress was formal on four evenings (evening dress or dark suits). Requirements for the other nights are equally divided between informal (suits or sports jackets for men, dresses or trouser suits for women) and casual.

■ **BOOKS TO READ:** *The Czar's Madman* by Jaan Kross (Harvill, £8.99, ISBN 0 00771 201 6). *Scandinavia and Baltic Europe on a Shoestring* (Lonely Planet, £10.95, ISBN 0 86442 251 2). *Insight Guide Baltic States* (£13.99, ISBN 9 62421 182 5).

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WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 25

DEMOPHOBIA
(b) A person who has a morbid fear of crowds and massed humanity. The condition of most of us during the Christmas shopping festival, or when exposed to some hypertechnical shopping and showing such as Brent Cross. If all the people who suffer from it were put together in one place, they would not like it one little bit.

RUPTUARY
(a) A commoner or plebeian. A rare rhyme for voluptuary. "So glad you have gone into the estate agent racket now, Tanya. It always seemed to me you were suited for ruptuary work."

BATOLOGY
(b) The constant repetition of the same words or phrases in speech or writing. A battologist is one who litters on. It is the exact description of television commercials, sales chat by sellers of Volvo and encyclopedias, and homilies by spouses.

GREGORY-POWDER
(a) A laxative powder, containing rhubarb, magnesium and ginger, invented by a Scottish doctor named Gregory, who died in 1822. "Mmmmm," you murmur appreciatively as you try the herbal powder your hostess has just sprinkled on your Gnocchi Fundadori. "It's not unlike Gregory-Powder, isn't it?"

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France: Mayhem in the hotel and restaurant trade as prices rise

Too much room at the inn

The French hotel and restaurant industry is in dire straits because tourists, particularly the British, can no longer afford French prices. RICHARD BINNS, the author of *French Leave Finesse*, blames the arrogance of chefs, an overvalued franc and the country's politicians for selling the French soul to Europe.

Almost two years ago to the day I warned in *The Times* that the French Government's franc policy had caused mayhem in the country's hotel and restaurant industry. Now, after numerous trips to France compiling *French Leave Finesse*, I find the country in a deeply unhappy, soul-searching mood. The air of depression in *La belle France* is overwhelming, and today, the hotel and restaurant industry (the country's largest, in terms of income and employees and its largest foreign currency earner) is in dire straits.

Since 1980 I have talked and listened to hundreds of chefs, restaurateurs and hoteliers throughout France. In the last year or so many have gone bust — including, for the first time since the accolade was created in 1931, two Michelin three-star chefs; for the remaining vast majority, profits are zero and survival has become a precarious business. The industry is in crisis. Without exception they all work like Trojans; to see them brought to their knees, through no fault of their own, fills me with the deepest gloom. Who is to blame? A two-word answer suffices: the politicians. A new president, Chirac, and a new prime minister, Juppé — both as hell-bent as their predecessors to be at the heart of the new European order with its single currency, social chapter and federal union — have brought no respite for the industry; indeed they have made matters worse.

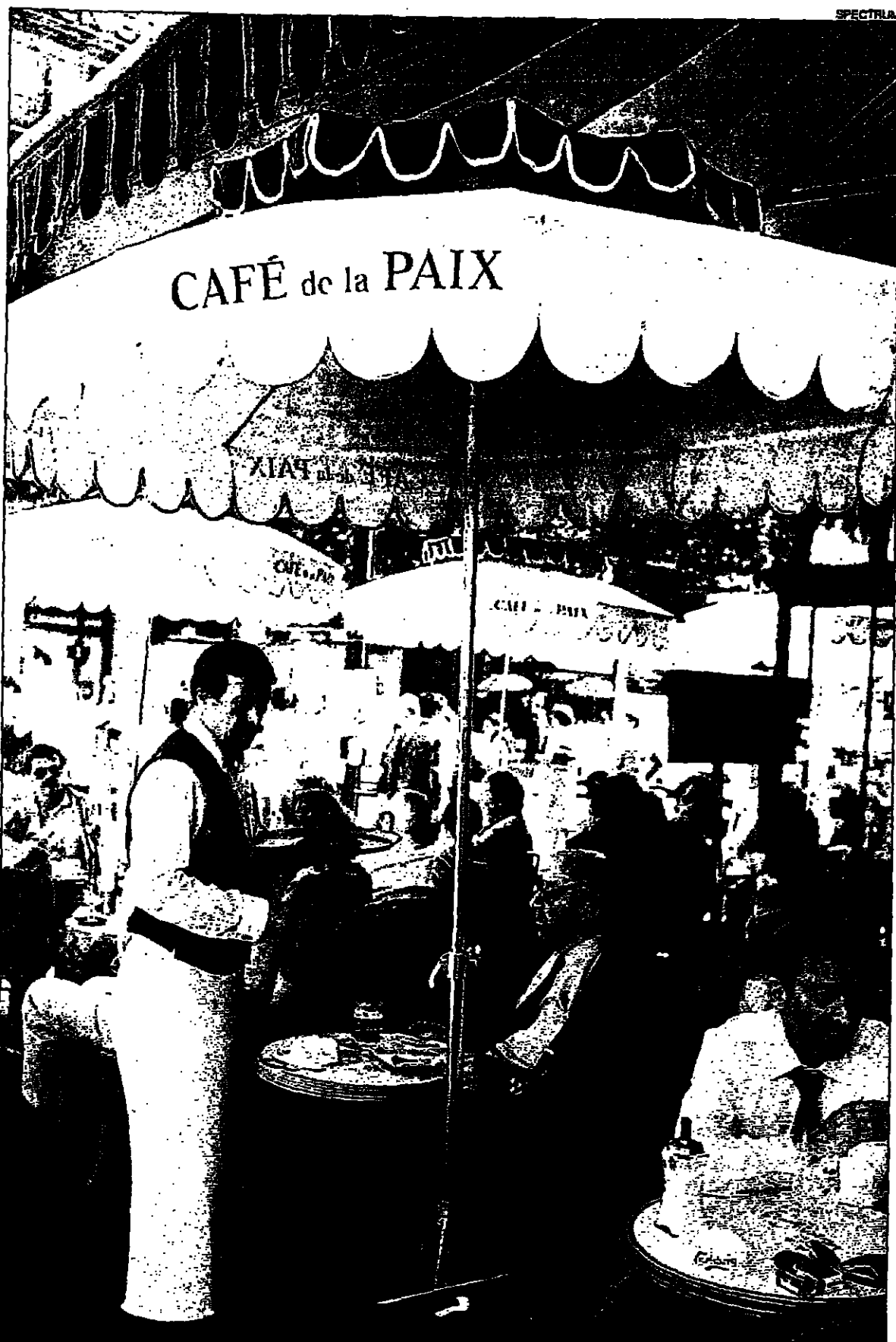
What are the reasons for the industry's predicament? The trio of excessive TVA (VAT) charges of 20.6 per cent, high minimum wages (more than £600 per month); and Mont-Blanc-sized employers' social security taxes (more than 40 per cent on top of gross wages).

Yet another reason stands out — that wretched franc policy. The franc is grossly overvalued: no wonder unemployment is so high and that far fewer Britons, Americans, Italians and Spaniards visit France. The strong currency and both higher direct and indirect taxes mean fewer francs in the pockets of foreign tourists and French consumers.

Two weeks ago I carried out a telephone poll of 54 hotels in my new guide — 5 per cent of the entries. I asked the owners to estimate the percentage decrease in the number of Britons visiting their establishments this year — just one of the many worries they all face. The average fall was a catastrophic 38 per cent.

To make matters worse, not one French chef, hotelier and restaurateur I spoke to during 1995/96 wanted to be part of the EU and all were deeply worried about the bleak future facing their industry.

Eating out in provincial France is in many ways much less enjoyable than the British equivalent: eclectic repertoires and a far greater variety are the big pluses here. Most French chefs are stuck in classical cooking trammings: culinary styles from other parts of Europe and the globe have made almost zero impact on French cuisine. The words "eclectic", "cosmopolitan" and "liberation" mean little to most chefs. The real cause of this culinary constipation in France is the attitude of the French themselves. Their arrogance and insularity, in many things, is staggering. Talk to chefs, talk to restaurateurs, talk to sommeliers — those who



French restaurant owners report a huge fall in bookings and even Michelin-starred chefs have had difficulties

have travelled abroad will tell you what an impossible task they face in persuading their French clients to try foreign wines or dishes.

The pain facing my friends across the Channel will soon become even more acute when, next year, even fewer Britons holiday in France. Make no mistake, Le Shuttle and the P & O-Stena ferry operation will be increasing their prices; they must do to survive. Only one positive action will start French tills ringing again: if France pulled out of the ERM and devalued. There's no chance of Chirac and Juppé introducing such policies so, perhaps, the markets will do it for them — just as they did here in September 1992.

The problem besetting France's hotel and restaurant industry should be a salutary lesson for us all. Do we really want to be part of the EU? Or am I right in thinking that "our Ken" has, at last, begun to see the light? I suggest that Kenneth Clarke is made French Finance Minister for five minutes and is challenged to

introduce five one-minute policy changes to breathe instant life into the dead-on-its-feet French hotel and restaurant trade. Blustering generalisations, Clarke trademarks, would not be tolerated — just five certain-to-work policy changes.

If the challenge is too taxing for Mr Clarke then I would be happy to propose five changes which I have been putting to numerous French hoteliers, restaurateurs and chefs during the past two years. All agreed that these measures would work and would welcome them with open arms. My changes would be:

- Withdrawal from the ERM.
- Devaluation of the franc by 10-15 per cent.
- Cutting, savagely, French employers' social security taxes on gross wages from 40-50 per cent to 10 per cent or less.
- Cancel all minimum wage legislation.
- Decrease TVA (VAT) from 20.6 per cent to 17.5 per cent.

French restaurateurs and hoteliers

only survive now by employing fewer staff and by taking more and more short cuts. Standards of service are lower than ever before. The five changes above are already in place in the UK: that's why British industry is prospering; and why unemployment is so much lower here. They would also rejuvenate the French catering and hotel industry (and all French industry): the irony is that this would mean instant death for a single currency, the social chapter and federal union. Finally, in view of all the earlier invalidating evidence, why does Mr Clarke persist in his delusion that our best interests are linked to a single currency and a European Union?

● *French Leave Finesse* (Chiltern House, £9.99) by Richard Binns is a 416-page guide with 1,065 hotel and restaurant recommendations. It is available direct from him at 4 Waterside, The Moorings, Myton Road, Leamington Spa CV31 3QA; no charge for postage.

JILL CRAWSHAW'S TRAVEL TIPS

Flower power

FOUR tours have been added to Cox & King's (0171-873 5000) 18-strong 1997 Botany and Wild-flower collection: the High Pyrenees and Ordesa National Park are the centres for its 15-day tour in July based at Formigal, which costs £1,295 fully inclusive. On an 11-day visit to the Austrian village of Obergurgl (also in July), holidaymakers should be able to see Alpine summer flowers, and spring flowers near the snow line.

Denver's Botanic Gardens, the new Hudson Gardens and wildflowers of the alpine tundra and Aspen woodlands are the lure on a 16-day American Colorado Rockies tour (£1,980 half-board) based on the old silver mining town of Breckenridge.

Between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and the North and South American continents, Costa Rica's variety of habitats provide rich pastures for flora and fauna enthusiasts to enjoy on a 16-day November (1997) tour (£2,100 half-board). All tours, which include flights, are led by botanical experts.

Turkish time

IT IS hard to believe that with the Turkish coast's popularity there is still somewhere that offers "complete escapism". Yet that is what Simply Turkey (0181-747 1011) promises on Sovayse Island, in the 1930s a retreat for Fethiye's wealthy. A two-week apartment holiday costs from £352, including not only flights but use of a motor launch with boatman for trips to the mainland.

For those wanting to join in the life of a tiny but hospitable Turkish village, two weeks in a traditional-style stone villa at Uzumlu costs from £471 with flights and car hire.

A week's "Hidden Turkey" tour in June that helps to give visitors an insight into Turkish custom, follows old caravan trails, studies kilim designs and attends greased wrestling matches. The tour costs £675 half-board.

Single parents

TO CATER for some of the 1.4 million one-parent families in the UK with children under 16, often at a disadvantage on package

holidays on which children's discounts are dependent on travelling with two adults, First Choice's (0161-745 4600) One Parent Family Deals are available for early bookers at specified family-friendly resorts. These offer child prices on two children travelling with only one adult.

Not such a good deal on self-catering holidays perhaps, where families may have to fork out for under-occupancy supplements. In Majorca this can amount to £22.40 per night, but at the two-star Hotel Panorama Beach in Puerto Pollensa, a week's half-board in early April will cost £199 per adult, £99 for each child; in July £359 and £255 respectively.

Mini-cruise

BRITANNY Ferries (0990 360360) has a return mini-cruise between Portsmouth or Plymouth and Santander in northern Spain for £49. The price includes a berth but no meals.

Good sport

THE 1997 Hong Kong Rugby Sevens between March 21 and 23, upgraded to the World Cup Sevens, will be the last before the Chinese takeover. David Dryer Sports Tours (0171-831 7799) has a four-night package to Hong Kong departing March 19, with flights and first class accommodation plus match tickets (from £1,500).

The company offers a range of sporting visits which can be tailor-made; they include Georgia v England at football (Nov 9, £275), the British Lions Rugby tour of South Africa (19 days covering all three matches, from £2,000, May 1997) and the Ryder Cup in Spain in September next year — not yet priced.

Ship shape

THE WORLD's first cruise ship over 100,000 tons, *Carnival Destiny*, is being launched in Venice on October 24, and will make her maiden voyage from Miami to the Caribbean in November. She is 892ft long, 12 decks high (taller than the Statue of Liberty) and has a maximum capacity of 3,350 passengers. Details from Equity Cruises: 0171-729 1929.

Bigger fish

ANGLING Travel (01263 761602) is offering weekend courses on Izaak Walton's favourite Derbyshire river, the Dove, with John Bailey, angling expert and tele-

vision presenter. The price of £259 includes three nights and some meals. The company specialises in journeys following the Big Ones — salmon in Russia, mahseer in India and Nepal, pike and barbel in Europe, steelhead fishing in British Columbia, sturgeon on the Caspian and Arctic char in Greenland.

Grand tour

AN exhibition at the Tate Gallery (0171-887 8000), *Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the 18th Century* (10am-5.50pm, Mon-Sat, 2-5.50pm Sun, £6, concessions £3.50, until January 5) includes paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures, snuff boxes, fans and other objects from public and private collections around the world. "Holiday snapshots" are also on view as the 18th-century trippers posed for portraits against a backdrop of the Forum or the Colosseum to prove "I am cultured".

Although the Grand Tour took in several countries, the exhibition concentrates on Italy with its great cities Florence, Rome, Venice, Naples and Palermo. To coincide with the exhibition, Magic of Italy (01233 21610) is offering a ten-day luxury coach tour between Rome, Florence, Venice and Verona for £999 to include flights, B&B accommodation, entrance fees and guides.

Sea food

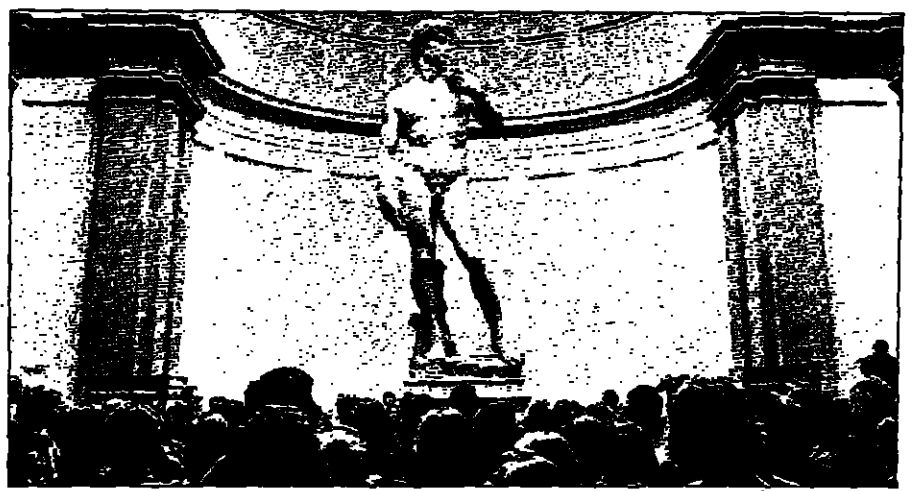
CRUISE food is usually memorable for quantity rather than quality, but next year it should be something special on the Silversea Cruises (0171-739 4029) series of culinary voyages in conjunction with the Cordon Bleu Academy, which focus on cookery demos, wine, and table presentations.

On a two-week spice-oriented cruise, the "Essence of the East" from Mombasa to Singapore starting this December, French perfumer Alain Voisot will lecture on famous scents and passengers can sample them. Prices from £3,222.

Correction

THE photograph used to illustrate our article on the grand tour of Italy last week was not of Amalfi, as described on the slide delivered to *The Times*, but of Positano. We regret that the error occurred.

● Kate Muir is ill. Insider's Guide to Paris will return next week.



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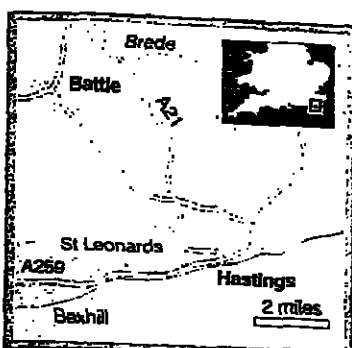
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Britain: The bohemian delights of Hastings and a visit to the site where the action really took place in 1066

Fishing for compliments



Saga Holidays, operator to the mature traveller, recently announced that they were reducing the number of English seaside resorts they patronised from 20 to four. Hastings was not one of the lucky four. In fact, it wasn't one of the previous 20. Saga dropped Hastings years ago.

And yet if you have a taste for slightly raffish, dilapidated English seaside towns, then you should try Hastings. Its charms may be less obvious than those of old stalwarts like Bournemouth and Llandudno, but hunting them out is all part of the fun.

Some say that the town has been in decline ever since its medieval heyday as the most westward of the Cinque Ports, until its rickety harbour was washed away by the Great Storm of 1287. During the 14th century it was repeatedly sacked by our French neighbours. But arguing a 700-year decline may be exaggerating the case a little. In fact, Hastings had something of a boom as a Victorian resort, not as sleepy as Eastbourne but not as brassy as Brighton.



Hastings is a genuine fishing port, one of the last places in England where fishermen still winch their boats up the shingle beach

to a friend: "I have been swimming and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs — and walking on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the *dolce far niente*."

Famous painters who have been inspired by Hastings include Turner, Peter de Wint and David Cox and, as with their present-day counterparts, it is the sea with its many changes of light, and the ramshackle shoreline, that have primarily attracted them. The museum is full of the kind of local topographical paintings usual in provincial museums: artists quite unknown, but the paintings fascinating, especially those of pre-Victorian Hastings as an old fishing town, the boat-strewn beach looking

pretty much the same today. And indeed, the other great charm of Hastings is its foreshore. This is one of the last places in England where fishermen still winch their boats up the shingle beach on cables and capstans. And it is still a genuine fishing port, from where local men put out in small wooden craft, and there isn't a deep-sea trawler or factory ship to be seen.

At the top of the beach stand the 43 surviving net shops, tall narrow buildings of black-pitched timber, used by fishermen to dry their nets and mend their boats. In among the shops are stalls selling the freshest of fish, straight from the sea. The quality is excellent, and you can

have a plate of mussels, cockles and whelks for 45p. If eating out, you could try the Mermaid Café which last year was given four stars as "the best fish and chips on the South Coast" by no less a gastronome than Jonathan Meades of *The Times*.

The Old Town is a delight and has preserved its old buildings and charm without becoming prettified and anodyne. Many houses are still residential, not solicitors offices, and are riddled with secret passages and smugglers' cellars.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare notoriously appears to believe that Bohemia is by the sea. But of course, he may have been thinking of Hastings.

CHRISTOPHER HART

The delights of Battle

Much to the exasperation of the locals, who find themselves forever redirecting bewildered tourists, the Battle of Hastings did not take place at Hastings. It was fought eight miles up the old London road (A2001) at a place which, not surprisingly, was destined to become known as Battle.

The battle itself, 930 years ago this week, was in fact far from a foregone conclusion. Three times on that day the Norman task force hurled itself up the steep slopes of Senlac Hill to be repulsed by the Saxon army of King Harold lining the ridge above. With dusk fast approaching, the elite knights of Duke William's cavalry spearheaded a desperate final effort. This time William had chosen to concentrate his attack directly against Harold's personal standard. But at the critical moment, with Harold wounded by an arrow, the royal banner began to retreat. The morale of the Saxon army wavered. As the defensive shield wall finally broke, William's knights carved a bloody path forward. By 6.30pm one of the most important battles in English history had run its bloody course, though it had been a close-run thing with the 4,000 dead fairly evenly divided between the sides.

Today the battlefield, and the buttermilk yellow stones of the Norman Abbey built to mark the site, belong to English Heritage. The latterday visitor can wander the slopes of Senlac Hill and relive it all, courtesy of the guided audio tour. For those with less time to spare, a ten-minute film loop (under cover close to the English Heritage shop) briefly outlines the story of the battle.

Although the abbey itself was largely demolished during Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries, the west range remains substantially intact. The impressive abbey gatehouse also remains, standing sentinel above the market town of Battle which grew up in its shadow.

The town itself exudes a predominantly Georgian ambience, although traces of earlier Tudor and medieval architecture are still in evidence. Even on a rainy autumn Sunday with the shops

closed, the town has undercover attractions — the museum houses a life-size replica of part of the Bayeux Tapestry.

An alternative experience of bygone ages is afforded by Buckley's Yesterday's World opposite the abbey gatehouse. Eschewing the Saxon/Norman theme which tends to dominate the area, Buckley's offers a glimpse into the more recent past. Here, meticulously set-dressed rooms and streets span an era from the Victorians to the 1930s — there is even a complete 1930s country railway platform and a splendid fudge factory.

At the opposite end of the High Street, the Medieval Almshouse building houses a model of the town, a coffee shop and an award-winning garden. Dotted along the High Street and intersecting Mount Street, you can find a surprisingly cosmopolitan selection of pubs, inns,



The death of King Harold as shown in the Bayeux Tapestry

wine bars and eateries. These cater for most pockets and tastes, ranging from the Bonani Tandoori opposite the Almshouse, to the quaint Bayeux Cottage tearooms in Mount Street.

DENISE GUEST

For information about accommodation, restaurants and things to see around Battle, contact the Tourist Information Centre (01424 77372). Denise and Ken Guest are authors of *British Battles: The Front Lines of History* (English Heritage/HarperCollins, £19.99).

FACT FILE

- Network Away Break from London: £18.40 return.
- Royal Victoria Hotel, Marina, St-Leonards-on-Sea (01424 445544): double rooms from £66. Norton Villa, Hill Street, Old Town (01424 428168): B&B from £18.
- The Mermaid Café, 2 Rock-a-Nore Road; Rosers Restaurant, 64 Eversfield Place, St Leonards (01424 712215); Egon Royal Star, From £65 for two.
- Don't miss the Hastings Embroidery, Town Hall, Queens Road. £1.25. Closed weekends.

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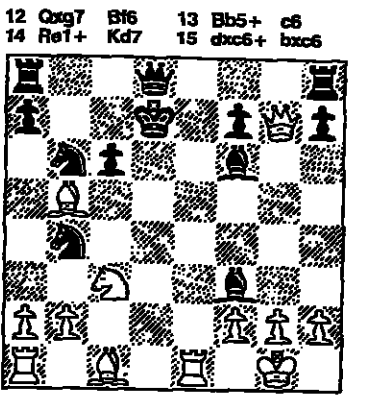
by Raymond Keene

I AM OFTEN asked what is the best way to start playing correspondence chess. Correspondence chess now has its own magazine, *Chess Mail*, and its latest issue claims that with fax or e-mail play, the duration of a game by post that might previously have lasted up to five years, can now be cut by a factor of four or five. This week's game is by Jonathan Penrose, ten times British over-the-board champion and now number two on the world correspondence ranking list.

White: Jonathan Penrose; Black: Richard Goldenberg
13th Correspondence World Ch. 1989-91
Scandinavian Defence

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Nf6
3 d4 Nf6 4 Bg4
5 d5 Nf6 6 Bc3
7 d5 Nf6 8 Bc3
9 d5 Nf6 10 Bc3
11 d5 Nf6

The opening has been a sharp version of the Scandinavian or Centre Counter Defence, in which Black has sacrificed pawn structure and king safety in order to go for material gain. It has proved quite popular in recent over-the-board and correspondence games.



FLORA BRITANNICA: THE GLAMOROUS AND THE EXQUISITE

In the concluding part of his definitive guide to Britain's wild beauty, **RICHARD MABEY** celebrates our flowering stars, from the rose to the orchid

THE SNAKE'S-HEAD fritillary is one of the most darkly glamorous and one of the most well known of British flowers. Across southern and middle England, a flamboyant suite of local names — snake's-head in Oxfordshire, leper's lily in Somerset, shy widow in Warwickshire — suggested a flower that was once widespread and familiar. The names had seen those dusky, reptilian bells, with their chequered patches of mulberry and lilac overlapping like scales. Even up to the 1930s the fritillary grew in its thousands in more than a hundred 10km squares. It was florid, profuse, extraordinary, intensely local.

Yet the first official record of a wild fritillary in England was not made until 1736. In the two and a half centuries since that first "discovery", the fritillary has come and gone with frightening speed, its distribution savagely cut by agricultural drainage and development, from 27 counties before the last war to roughly the same number of individual meadows today.

The best known fritillary site in England is probably Magdalen College Meadow in Oxford, where in late April the entire northeastern half of the meadow seems to be covered by a tremulous purple haze. Yet, curiously for a university city devoted to scholarship and science, this spectacular display just a few hundred yards from the oldest botanic garden in Britain was not recorded by botanists until 1785. It is just possible that the Magdalen colony was an introduction from another, more convincingly wild, Oxfordshire site. About six miles west of the city is the village of Ducklington, in the Windrush Valley. This has long had fritillaries growing in its low-lying meadow, and in the 18th century the living of its church was under the patronage of Magdalen College. It has been suggested that an incumbent at Ducklington may have taken a fancy to the flowers and carried some bulbs back to his college to plant.

The celebration of the flower, including the holding of a "Fritillary Sunday", when flowers can be picked (or simply admired) in return for collections for charities, has been going on in many sites for at least a century.

Snake's-heads survive on the Duke of Wellington's estate at Stratfield Saye. These meadows are still open to the public (just for looking) when the fritillaries are in flower. To the east of Oxford, one of the largest and most famous Fritillary Sunday sites was in Dinton,



The rare pasqueflower — anemone of Passiflora

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ONE OF THE most beautiful of our native flowers is the Pasqueflower, now a nationally scarce plant. Its purple petals, held in the shape of a bell, surround a tuft of yellow stamens and are cushioned on greyish, feathery leafage. It blooms around Easter time — hence the name "Pasque", meaning (like paschal) of Easter. Its largest colony is on the steep banks of Barnsley Warren in the Cotswolds and it continues to grow in some quantity at Barnack, in the old stone quarry known as the Hills and Holes.

near Ford, Buckinghamshire. The first suggestion that there were fritillaries in the area appears on a privately commissioned map, dated 1803, showing a plot labelled "Frogcup Meadow". Frogcup Meadow was destroyed.



The snake's head fritillary has a suite of local names

1950s, but a few fritillaries have clung on in a strip of damp commonland between the old meadow and the lane to Aston Mullins. I found three blooms in mid-April 1993, and met two local men who confirmed that several local had taken bulbs before the meadow was destroyed. To see fritillaries in immense abundance, you must go to North Meadow, in the Thames Valley at Cricklade, Wiltshire, where in a good year there may be several million in flower. In 1978, a television reporter considered making a programme about this rare plant but when he discovered how many grew at North Meadow, he lost interest. How could a plant growing with millions of its own kind be described as rare?

THE WILD ROSE is among our best loved and most familiar flowers and the rose is England's national flower, but none of the likely candidates for this honourable position is a native species. The Red Rose of Lancaster is the Mediterranean *Rosa gallica*, the White Rose of York almost certainly a hybrid between the native field-rose, *R. arvensis*, and the damask rose *R. x damascena*. Even the heraldic roses carved on churches and memorials throughout the land are modelled more on the Holy Rose of Abyssinia (*R. richardii*), the oldest of all cultivated roses and figured in paintings on the murals at Knossos in Crete, than on any indigenous briar.

There are 14 species currently accepted as native to Britain and three of these have played a modest part in the evolution of various groups of cultivated rose.

The dog rose is the most abundant and widespread species. The sweet-scented blooms vary in colour from deep pink to white and it has produced a small number of cultivated varieties, the best known of which is 'Abbotswood', which has scented, double, pink flowers. The field-rose always has pure white flowers, with conspicuous golden anthers, and a musky, honey scent. It is the ancestor of the Ayrshire roses, now very rare in cultivation. It is surprising that the harsh downy-rose has not been taken into cultivation at all as it is a beautiful and subtle rose with downy leaves and deep pink, velvety petals.

Barnet rose, a low-growing species, largely confined to dry sandy places near the sea and to calcareous areas inland, has the sweetest smell of any native rose — a mixture of honey and jasmine. It has white flowers, frequently tinged with cream (or more rarely with pink), prominent golden stamens, and the leaves are small and oval, very like those of salad burnet (hence the name).

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BY RICHARD MABEY
PAGE 8

There are many other foreign rose species and cultivars which have naturalised from gardens. A few have been thought lost, but have then been rediscovered. The most celebrated is the deep-coloured Victorian rose that was found scrambling up the wall of Woolverstone Church in Suffolk by the late Humphrey Brooke, an eccentric but distinguished rosarian. The bush was more than 100 years old but still flowering. Brooke thought it had the strongest scent of any rose he knew and once recounted to me how a blind friend had "put his nose in a bloom and said that if this scent was available in a bottle it would put every part in Europe out of business". The Woolverstone Church rose is now back on the market as 'Surpassing Beauty of Woolverstone'.

● Extracted from *Flora Britannica* (Sinclair-Stevenson, £30). © 1996 Richard Mabey.

Like rare and exotic insects

ORCHIDS

Orchids make up the most mysterious of our wild plant families. They have extraordinary life cycles, sometimes blooming only once in a decade. A little imagination can make their flowers resemble insects, reptiles, ball-gowned ladies, even monkeys, and a little more can bridge the gap between English woodlands and distant rainforests. Yet there is surprisingly little mythology attached to them, beyond the rather negative (and not particularly accurate) belief that they are all rare, endangered and highly sensitive.

Although this is true of some species, others are proving themselves highly adaptable and capable of moving into the most improbable habitats. Many orchids produce enormous quantities of exceptionally lightweight seed, which can be blown long distances. These days this often fetches up on artificially open habitats, low in nutrients and free of competition (quarries, for example), which replicate orchid-rich natural habitats such as sand dunes and cliff tops. It is this paradoxical, opportunistic quality of many orchids — the exquisite bloom transforming the lime-rich waste tip — that has become the basis for the modern myth of the family, a botanical version of Beauty and the Beast.

One orchid that is genuinely rare and now reduced to a single, heavily guarded site in Yorkshire, is the lady's slipper. Collectors have played a role in its decline, though it was probably never a common plant in Britain. It formerly grew wild in open woods on the Pennine limestone, from Derbyshire to Cumberland and Durham.

The remarkable flowers — claret-coloured petals crowning a large, bright yellow pouch, rather like a garden calceolaria — make the lady's slipper the only native orchid that plainly belongs to the same group as the tropical species sold by florists. The flowers most frequently mistaken for this rare prodigy by non-botanists are the gaudy but not dissimilarly shaped blooms of that impetuous immigrant, the Indian balsam.

The story of the military orchid's decline, fall and subsequent resurrection in England could be a parable for the fortunes of all our wild flowers. Up to the 19th century it had been comparatively widespread in the chalk country of southern England. "Soldiers' Cuckoos" as John Gerard called it (literally, "soldiers' testicles"), is a plant of the warm south, on the edge of its range in Britain. Some years it would flower, other years not even appear above ground, and during the cool summers of the second half of the 19th century it began to disappear.

By about 1914 it seems to have been extinct. For the next 30 years the orchid was not seen, or at least not reported. But the possibility that an isolated specimen of this handsome flower — it is a little like a compact lady orchid — might be blooming in some remote corner of the Chiltern Hills turned searching for lost Soldiers into an insatiable quest for some orchid lovers (and probably some collectors, too).

In the end, the military orchid was found again almost by chance. The botanist J E Lousley had gone to

the southern Chilterns in May 1947 ostensibly for a picnic. But, as he put it, "I selected our stopping places on the chalk with some care, and naturally wandered off to see what I could find. To my delight I stumbled on the orchid just coming into flower." But he never made the location of his find public. It was not until the 1960s that the colony (or possibly another in the same region) was refound in Buckinghamshire. The site was Homefield Wood near Marlow and was announced by a coded telegram from its discoverers: "The soldiers are safe in their home field".

In 1975, the naturalists' trust that managed the site decided to go public and announced the orchid's return amid high security and not a little melodrama. I wrote at the time: "This time local naturalists took steps to ensure that it would not vanish again because of any human agency by setting an electric fence around it. There were rumours of round-the-clock watches and of a warden who carried a shotgun with his sandwiches... When the press was finally told about the return of this prodigal to an idyllic woodland glade only 50 miles from London, it knew it had a story... More people must have seen the rather smudgy black-and-white picture of *Orchis militaris* the following morning than had seen the plant in its whole history in this country."

This overprotective stance was abandoned at the end of the 1980s. A summer warden was installed at Homefield Wood and the general public welcomed. The population has grown to more than 50 plants (with more than 20 flowering in 1993), and thousands of people have seen them and the 11 other species of orchid that grow close by.

The only fencing seen these days is to protect the plants from trampling and rabbit-grazing. And, since no pollinating insect has yet been firmly identified, visitors in May can witness a touching act of symbiosis between orchid-lovers and needy plants: the voluntary wardens, on their knees, delicately extracting pollen from the flowers with proboscis-like stalks of grass, and ferrying it to other clumps.

The first sight of the beautiful and exotic bee orchid is an experience few flower-lovers ever forget. There is nothing quite like the sculptured oddity of the blooms, perched like pink-winged bumblebees on the stalk (the brown "body" is even furry to the touch). Yet bee orchids sometimes behave like rampant weeds. They appear in huge numbers on disturbed chalk soils, linger for a few years and then vanish. Large populations have exploded like this on, for example, a roundabout near Hitchin, Hertfordshire; shingle banks bordering the Telephone Exchange car park in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire; and at old limestone quarries near Work-sop, Nottinghamshire.

The bee orchid flower is believed to have evolved originally as a decoy, to trick real bees into attempting to mate with successive flowers and so help with pollen transfer. But this has never been reliably observed, and in Britain the flowers are self-pollinating.

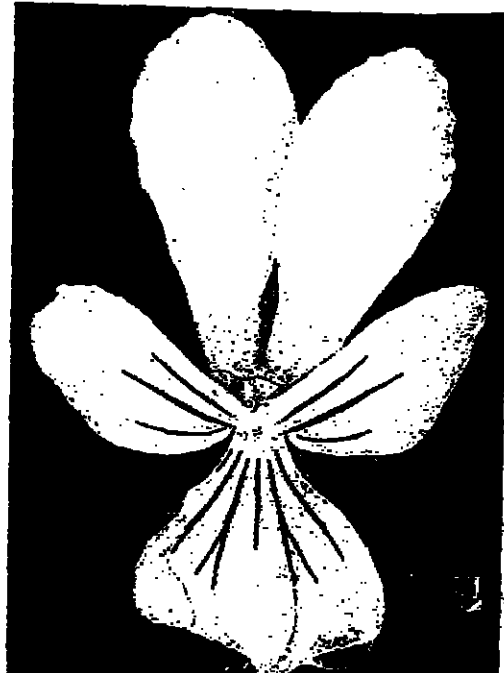


Pink-winged bumblebees on a stalk: bee orchids have appeared in the middle of a roundabout near Hitchin, and on shingle banks by a car park in Milton Keynes

PANSIES

THE exquisite flowers of the mountain pansy, normally pale yellow, are held on stiff stalks that seem to spring straight from the turf. On hill pastures you may see acres of them shimmering in the wind.

The plant has declined in many places because of agricultural pressure but is, in general, a resilient plant which enjoys soils with a high mineral content. It is highly variable in colour and form. Many of the Scottish colonies are entirely purple, save for some yellow streaking around the "eye". A magnificent form of this — a deep purple and at least an inch across — grows on Ben Lawers.



The mountain pansy may be a pale yellow or, as pictured here, almost white in colour

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BY RICHARD MABEY
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This variant can be seen in Scotland: deep purple with vivid yellow around the "eye"

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Sacked security chief predicts 'hot autumn' as officer corps challenges Kremlin

Lebed backing for army unrest forced President's hand

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

COUP FEAR

PRESIDENT Yeltsin's decision to sack General Aleksandr Lebed was taken after growing signs that his unruly security adviser was deliberately stirring up dissent in the armed forces, which could have led to a military insurrection as early as next week.

Reviewing the troubled relationship between the Russian leader and the former paratrooper general, it is clear that in the days leading up to his dismissal General Lebed was siding with the security forces against the Kremlin.

As recently as last month he gave a warning that the army could "mutiny" this autumn unless the military were paid their salaries due from August and were properly equipped.

At the time his remarks were dismissed by many in the Yeltsin team as further examples of alarmist rhetoric.

But by the beginning of this week they sat up and took notice when General Lebed returned to Tula, his parliamentary constituency. His presence there was disturbing since he was seen publicly endorsing General Aleksandr

Korzhakov, President Yeltsin's disgraced former bodyguard, who is planning to succeed General Lebed in the seat.

The prospect of an alliance between the two men, one with strong links to the army, the other closely tied to the security services, worried the Russian leader, who mentioned the pact as a reason for sacking General Lebed.

Then on Tuesday the gruff Afghan war veteran gave an extraordinary speech to the Airborne Forces Military Council, at which he attacked the Government for its failure to support the army and even savaged his own former ally, General Igor Rodionov, the Defence Minister. The paratrooper officers reportedly responded to the anti-government speech enthusiastically and when General Lebed prepared to leave he was given a standing ovation by soldiers.

The incident so upset the authorities that Mr Yeltsin later sacked Major-General Vladimir Kazantsev, the deputy commander of the paratroopers who criticised proposed cuts to the airborne units.

The next day General Anatoli Kulikov, the Interior Minister whose feud with General Lebed sparked the current crisis, spoke of a "creeping coup" and accused the National Security Adviser of attempting to form a private army of 50,000 troops called the "Russian Legion".

Although the truth behind the allegations is still unclear, the next day the threat of a far more real military uprising surfaced in the daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*. The paper published a letter by officers serving on the General Staff, it gave a warning that unless their salaries were paid by October 25 the Kremlin leadership would do well to leave the country. "We have enough force to make these gentlemen [in the Kremlin] abandon their plans [to weaken Russia]," the letter said.

General Lebed was not named in the document, but he did not attempt to distance himself from it, and even brandished a copy of the letter at his press conference after his sacking. "We are heading for a very hot autumn," he said. "I think this [crisis] will start on October 25, as can be seen from the letter."



General Aleksandr Lebed during an interview with a German news magazine in Moscow yesterday

Role model who forged a nation through intrigue and slaughter



Nikolai Cherkassov as Ivan in Eisenstein's film

IVAN IV, who reigned from 1533 to 1584, was known as Grozny or "the Terrible". By establishing the *oprichnina* — the forerunner of Russian security agencies — he was able to set aside whole provinces for his private will and domain, and to unleash a reign of unrestrained terror.

By razing Novgorod, and slaughtering its entire population in a bloodbath that proceeded for weeks, he affirmed Moscow's supremacy in Russia. By destroying the power of the ancient boyar clans and their *zemsky Sobor*, or council, he created a subservient, hierarchical society. By appoint-

IVAN THE TERRIBLE

ing the first Patriarch of Moscow he completed the separate and dependent nature of the Russian Orthodox Church, henceforth severed from all outside influences. By annexing the khanate of Kazan, where the great Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation was raised to a Christian victory in a Muslim land, he gave notice of unrestrained imperial ambitions.

From *Europe — A History*, Norman Davies, OUP, £25.

Chorus of rivals hails dismissal

BY RICHARD BEESTON

UNITED FRONT

RUSSIAN leaders gave a rare display of unity yesterday, when politicians from across the spectrum praised President Yeltsin for dismissing General Aleksandr Lebed, the National Security Adviser.

"Lebed reconciled me with the present Government because I suddenly quite clearly saw what a frightening face the other could have," said Stanislav Govorukhin, the leader of the left-wing People's Power faction, which normally opposes the administration. His view was echoed by Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party head, and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, who lost millions of voters to General Lebed in last June's presidential elections.

Other potential rivals for the presidency also expressed their relief. Yuri

Luzhkov, the powerful Mayor of Moscow, said the decision to sack the unruly general should have been taken long ago. Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, said he looked forward to the appointment of a new security chief as early as next week.

In a display of solidarity with President Yeltsin, legislators rejected overwhelmingly a motion calling for the removal of General Anatoli Kulikov, the Interior Minister, whose feud with General Lebed prompted his dismissal. The former security chief remained oblivious to the invective yesterday and joked that he planned to attend a production of Aleksandr Tolstoy's *Ivan the Terrible*, the 16th-century Russian despot, in an effort to pick up tips on how to "run the country".

He also made it clear, however, that he is already planning his comeback and his next challenge for the presidency. "I will create a system which will allow me to come to power in the next election and change the whole lifestyle of this country," he said. "Russia is the richest country in the world with the biggest potential, but the people's lives here are the worst in the world. I want to arrange a decent life for my compatriots."

While some commentators and politicians have written off his chances of ever reaching power again, others issued a warning that his sacking may well have strengthened his popularity.

An article in *Izvestia* said: "It is easy to remove Lebed from his post, but how to remove him from Russian politics, which more and more resembles a criminal feud and is in need of tough men who can take bold decisions?"

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tycoon to seek top colony job

Hong Kong: Tung Chee-hwa, the shipping magnate believed to be China's favourite to lead Hong Kong after the British colony reverts to Peking rule next year, formally declared his candidacy yesterday.

To underscore his commitment, the Shanghai-born Mr Tung also resigned as chairman of Orient Overseas (International), the shipping empire he inherited from his father. (AP)

Football rites

Guatemala City: Guatemalans have begun preparations for burying the first of up to 82 football fans crushed by an avalanche of bodies at a World Cup qualifying match against Costa Rica. (Reuters)

Taipei rioting

Taipei: Taiwan's divided parliament voted to restore funding for a stalled nuclear power plant, sparking riots in one of the worst outbreaks of unrest in the fledgling democracy. (Reuters)

Thief's hit list

Greenwich, Connecticut: A burglar suspected of stealing millions of dollars in silver from Bruce Springsteen, Ivana Trump and others was arrested carrying a directory of the rich and famous. (AP)

Mass amnesty

Phnom Penh: King Norodom Sihanouk granted an amnesty to nearly all Cambodia's prisoners. The King said he wanted to be fair after pardoning notorious Khmer Rouge guerrillas. (AP)

Cult confusion

Tokyo: Shoko Asahara, the Japanese cult guru on trial over last year's subway gas attack, threw the court into confusion by admitting culpability and then declaring his innocence. (Reuters)

Phone boxing

Colmar: A couple found exchanging blows in a French phone box in the middle of the night were arrested by patrolling police and later ordered to do community service, a police spokesman said. (AFP)

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FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN KABUL.

He met Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Taliban chief, in the southern city of Kandahar — a rare encounter for a non-Afghan. Mullah Omar is so ultra-conservative he receives only Muslim envoys. Non-Muslim UN officials have failed to gain access.

He is ready to share a role in government with both Taliban and General Ahmed Shah Masood, the Tajik leader who was defence chief in the former Kabul administration.

A Russian draft resolution at the UN Security Council calling for an immediate end to hostilities is supported by the Central Asian countries. They look to General Dostum as a barrier against Taleban's hardline ideology. Both they and Russia will, therefore, seek to ensure that he is involved in any future government in Kabul.



BY CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

One of the early dictates of Taleban was to impose a fixed price on meat, set at about half the market rate. This was to ensure that every butcher in Kabul ran out of mutton and the price was so low shepherds refused to slaughter.

Nurses in the city's two hospitals work lengthy five-day shift cycles without going home, thus minimising the time spent travelling to and from work. There are elaborate restrictions on male doctors treating women patients, and women doctors are not allowed to go near a male patient.

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CHANGING TIMES

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Tasmania plant is 'oldest in the world'

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

WHAT could be the world's oldest living plant has been discovered in Tasmania, scientists said yesterday. The shrub, dubbed King's Holly but officially named *Lomatia tasmanica*, may be up to 40,000 years old.

It stands up to 26ft high and stretches almost a mile down two river gullies in Tasmania's south-west wilderness area.

The plant was found by botanists three years ago. The shrub was dated using a fossil found in one of the rainforest gullies. Stephen Harris, of the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service, said: "A fossil of an identical specimen has been found near the site in old gravel and that's been dated as more than 40,000 years old."

Previously the oldest plant was believed to be a cressote plant clone in California, estimated to be 11,700 years old.

Paris and Bonn in plan to scrap veto on EU integration

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

BRITAIN would lose its power to veto a future European defence force or other steps to closer integration under a scheme for a new flexible European Union, launched yesterday by France and Germany.

The Franco-German plan is an attempt by the two states at the heart of the EU to devise a way of bypassing objections from reluctant member states and launching common actions in all fields covered by the European Union, from economic affairs to immigration, police work and defence.

The scheme would in particular lend itself to the creation of a European foreign policy and defence system, the two governments say. A common defence policy involving willing states could be created within the frame of the Western European Union, it says.

Britain is resisting continental efforts to bring the WEU, the European pillar of the Nato alliance, under the aus-

pices of the European Union. The creation of new machinery for "accelerated integration" has emerged as a top priority at the current negotiations for revising the Maastricht treaty.

Britain supports the concept of a more flexible Europe, which most states agree will be especially necessary once the countries of the former Communist bloc join the Union early in the next century.

But London is suspicious of anything that smacks of an attempt to create a "hardcore" Europe along lines suggested two years ago by federal-minded German politicians. The German Foreign Ministry insisted yesterday: "We do not want a hardcore Europe."

However, the Franco-German plan is certain to raise such a prospect, given its insistence that "no member state can have the power of veto" over the desire of a group of states to band together over

any policy. The Government is committed to resisting any erosion of existing powers of veto in EU affairs.

The plan, drafted by Klaus Kinkel and Hervé de Charette, the Foreign Ministers, notes that Europe already operates a variable-speed arrangement. Britain's potential opt-out from monetary union is an example.

The ministers call for a broad clause of "reinforced co-operation" in the new Maastricht treaty which would enable groups of states to "move ahead".

A condition would be that this would not undermine the rights of non-participating states, the document says. The European Court of Justice would exercise authority over the scheme. Only a qualified majority of states would be needed to start common initiatives, but states participating in a more co-ordinated policy would have to take decisions unanimously.



An Antwerp policeman confronts a protest against the handling of the child sex scandal

Belgian King calls for moral revival

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN BRUSSELS

IN A surprise appeal, King Albert II of the Belgians yesterday called for "a profound change in our country" after numerous errors in a paedophile investigation created public outrage.

The monarch spoke amid nationwide protests as tens of thousands of Belgians from all walks of life marched for a fifth consecutive day, demanding a clean-up of a justice system seen as inept and corrupt.

King Albert met the parents of missing children after the dismissal of the chief investigator into the child pornography ring that has left at least four girls dead and half a dozen more children missing. "We are convinced that this tragedy must now be the opportunity for moral revival and profound change," the King said.

Jean-Luc Dehaene, the Prime Minister, said the dismissal of the investigating magistrate had sparked "an overall loss of confidence" in how Belgium is governed.

Hurricane cuts Cuba air links

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

BRINGING 90 mph winds, Hurricane Lili tore through Cuba yesterday, crossing the southern coast and dumping several inches of rain on the provinces of Havana and Matanzas.

Havana international airport was closed until further notice, while the state electricity company cut power to most parts of the capital to minimise damage, and thousands of residents in low-lying coastal districts were evacuated from their homes.

A cold front moving south through the southern United States seemed likely to push Lili away from the Florida coast, posing a greater risk to the islands of the Bahamas.

Esteban Lazo, the secretary of Havana's Communist Party, said about 75,000 people had been evacuated from vulnerable homes in a poor state of repair in Havana. Some

residents were offered shelter in a makeshift dormitory set up in the Council of State, President Castro's office in Revolution Square.

Havana appeared to have been spared the worst of the winds, as the hurricane passed over one of the least populated parts of the country, missing the other cities of Cienfuegos and Matanzas, as well as the tourist peninsula of Varadero.

However, the storm, which is the seventh hurricane this year, is almost certain to be a blow to Cuba's agricultural heartland, just as it slowly emerges from the economic crisis caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union, once its main trading partner and donor of financial aid.

Most at risk are Cuba's sugarcane and tobacco crops, two of its chief export and hard-currency earners.

Artful ruse at the Prado

Madrid: The authorities at the Prado Museum were told yesterday of a security lapse after it was discovered that a modern painting had been smuggled into the museum and hung between two Rembrandts (Tunku Varadarajan writes).

The painting, depicting a

skull against a dark background, was noticed by two tourists on a visit to the museum, who then alerted the curators. The painting had been hanging unnoticed for about five days, the museum said, although a source said it could have been there for weeks, or even months.

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Dole goes for broke with tax gamble in Reagan country

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX
IN RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

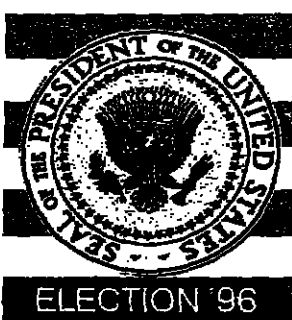
BOB DOLE, the Republican challenger for the US presidency, will gamble his dwindling campaign resources on the battle for California, the richest electoral prize of all the states, and the birthplace of the Republican revolution under Ronald Reagan.

Just 17 days before the election, he has decided to pour up to \$7 million (\$4.5 million) into California, and is said to have bought \$300,000 of television advertising in Los Angeles alone in the past 48 hours. He, his wife Elizabeth, and running-mate Jack Kemp will maintain between them a constant presence in the state until polling day.

"President Clinton is taking California for granted, just because he has Hollywood on his side," Mr Dole told a gathering in Riverside, southern California on Thursday. "But the heart of California is still Reagan country."

California, with 54 electoral college votes, a fifth of the total needed to win, is as large and complex as a nation in its own right. The north, around San Francisco, is traditionally Democratic and liberal but the inland region of the south, a mixture of suburban sprawl and scrubby desert, has long been a Republican stronghold.

Mr Reagan, who called the south the place where "good Republicans come home to die", used it to launch the tax-cutting philosophy that defined his presidency. Mr Dole



ELECTION '96

hopes that his platform of tax cuts, higher defence spending and curbs on immigration will have similar appeal.

After weeks of agonising, Mr Dole's decision to "bet the ranch" on California, jeopardising his chances in other marginal states such as New Jersey, was prompted by opinion polls showing that Mr Clinton's lead in the state is narrowing. Last week the respected Field poll suggested that it had halved to 10 points. On Wednesday, a poll by the *San Francisco Examiner* found a four-point drop in Mr Clinton's lead to 12 points.

But the gap is still formidable and other polls which show Mr Clinton ahead even in parts of southern California emphasise the challenge facing Mr Dole. In Riverside on Thursday, even his aides muttered that beating Mr Clinton might be "mission impossible". However, they point out that their endeavours may save Republican congressional seats and force Mr Clinton to spend time campaigning in a state he thought was secure.

Yesterday Clinton aides said they would step up spending in California in response but brushed off the new challenge. Leon Panetta, the White House Chief of Staff, said the Clinton campaign had not yet decided whether to concentrate on the presidential race, to get Mr Clinton the widest possible mandate, or to focus on marginal congressional races.

In the California battle, Mr Dole's best weapon is his promise of a 15 per cent tax cut and a "fairer, simpler tax system". To rousing cheers at a rally here, he announced that "we are going to end the IRS [Internal Revenue Service] as we know it".

In other echoes of Mr Reagan, he emphasised that states have more independence from "faraway potentates on the Potomac", and promised to resist defence cuts which have cost many Californian jobs.

Most divisively, and in sharp contrast to Mr Clinton, he threw his weight behind two contentious Californian schemes to curb benefits for illegal immigrants and help for minorities.

He also backed a proposition to block affirmative action for minorities.

In Riverside, at least, his message was received warmly. However, unless many others in California follow suit, the cradle of the Republican revolution will also be the place where it died.

Leading article, page 22



Bob Dole greets the rally at Riverside, where he took a tough line on immigration



Alemán: jailed in 1980

Vengeful Mayor on course to beat Ortega

FROM DAVID ADAMS
IN MANAGUA

FOR Arnoldo Alemán, the burly former Mayor of troubled Managua, the Nicaraguan presidential election tomorrow is a chance to settle personal scores.

As head of the Liberal Party alliance that leads the polls, Señor Alemán hopes to defeat his old nemesis, Daniel Ortega, the former guerrilla comandante who headed the left-wing Sandinista Government in the 1980s.

Señor Alemán has plenty of reasons to detest the Sandinistas. They jailed him in 1980 for alleged counter-revolutionary activities. When his father died, his jailers refused to allow him to attend the funeral. In 1989, as his wife lay dying of stomach cancer, the Sandinistas placed him under house arrest and seized his coffee farm.

Should Señor Alemán win, analysts fear his anti-Sandinista anger and combative style could plunge the country back into the confrontation and violence that has dominated Nicaragua's recent history.

Although his land was returned, he has pledged to force the Sandinistas to hand back or pay compensation for other confiscated property, including the house of his campaign chief, now occupied by the Ortega family.

When the Sandinistas were voted out of office in a surprise election defeat in 1990, Señor Alemán became Mayor of Managua and took relish in removing hundreds of Sandinistas from the city payroll. He set about removing all traces of the Sandinista revolution, including painting over several social realist murals that adorned main streets.

Sandinista hatred of Señor Alemán runs deep. They liken him to the hated dictator, Anastasio Somoza. As Mayor, they say, he displayed a style of corrupt, autocratic rule.

Señor Alemán, 50, denies any links to Somoza. But his Liberal Party was once a tool of the Somoza regime. His father, a judge, was a Somoza appointee, and Señor Alemán himself was a leader of the Liberal Student Youth organisation, a pro-Somoza group, in the 1960s.



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HEWLETT-PACKARD

Strategists turn their minds to fight for Congress

Republicans hope to clip Clinton coat-tails

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

AS BOB DOLE'S hopes of catching President Clinton fade, attention is switching to the other main contest on November 5: the battle for Congress.

The Democrats must gain three seats to recapture the Senate and 18 for the House. The tide is flowing in their direction, but record numbers of races are far too close to call and even Washington's most outspoken pundits hesitate to predict the outcome.

Mr Clinton's strategists were meeting yesterday to decide whether he should end the last 18 days pursuing a landslide victory by courting traditionally Republican states, or focus primarily on helping Democratic congressional candidates in states he may already have secured. Conversely, a reason Mr Dole has opted to fight on in California is not to abandon his party's congressional candidates there.

Who controls Congress will fundamentally affect the na-

ture of a second Clinton term. If the Republicans cling on, Mr Clinton would again be compelled to react to their agenda, although Newt Gingrich's chastened revolutionaries would almost certainly be more moderate.

If the Democrats regain control, Mr Clinton could return to the legislative activism of his first two years to leave his mark on America. George Will, a leading conservative columnist, argues that Republican candidates should now "advertise" Mr Dole's imminent defeat to help themselves.

The Senate is likely to remain Republican, but a dozen of the 34 Senate races could still go either way — a uniquely high number this late in the campaign. Democratic candidates have Senators Robert Smith of New Hampshire and Larry Pressler of South Dakota in trouble, and are challenging hard for Bob Dole's old Kansas seat where Sam Brownback, one of



Gingrich: unpopularity factor

Pressler: hitting big trouble

Weld: running neck and neck

Kerry: Boston Brahmins' battle

Helms: wily and ahead of foe

Mr Gingrich's young House revolutionaries, is the Republican candidate. They are running strongly in Colorado, Oregon, Maine and Wyoming, where Republican incumbents are retiring. They would love to defeat North Carolina's Jesse Helms, but the wily arch-conservative is

10 points ahead of his 1990 foe, Harvey Gantt. Republicans hope to win in three conservative Southern states — Alabama, Louisiana and Mr Clinton's home state of Arkansas — where veteran Democrats are retiring, and in Massachusetts where William Weld, the Governor, and John

Kerry, the Democrat incumbent, are neck and neck in the battle of the "Boston Brahmins". They have an outside chance of unseating Paul Wellstone, an unashamedly liberal first-term senator from Minnesota, and in New Jersey two congressmen, Bob Tor-

ricelli and Dick Zimmer, are dead level in a remarkably dirty race to succeed Bill Bradley, a retiring Democrat. The Democrats are most hopeful of winning the House, where all 435 seats are being contested. They are counting on Mr Clinton's coat-tails, polls showing Americans gen-

erally more likely to vote for Democrats, and Mr Gingrich's unpopularity. The Democrats are targeting the 44 first-term Republicans who won with less than 55 per cent of the vote in 1994. Republicans hope to win most of the 19 conservative Southern districts where Democrats

are retiring. However, Mr Gingrich has reduced his odds on the Republicans' holding the House from 10-1 to 5-1 and history is against them. The last times they took the House, 1946 and 1952, it was for one term only.

Leading article, page 23

Senate hopefuls dig up dirt in the Garden State

FROM TOM RHODES IN TRENTON, NEW JERSEY

CONFIDENT of victory next month, President Clinton flies to New Jersey tomorrow to do battle for a crucial Senate seat the Democrats must hold to regain Congress.

The race between two congressmen, Dick Zimmer, a Republican, and Bob Torricelli, a Democrat, to succeed Bill Bradley, the state's retiring Democratic senator, is one of the sleaziest and most costly in America this year. And it is also far too close to call, with at least a quarter of the voters undecided.

Although presidential polls have Mr Clinton easily ahead of Bob Dole in the Garden

State, the notoriously indecisive voters of New Jersey have yet to place such faith in Mr Torricelli, a vain, slick Italian-American and former boyfriend of Bianca Jagger. Fought almost entirely over the television airwaves, the duel has degenerated into a mud-slinging contest of extraordinary proportions.

Mr Zimmer, 52, has painted his opponent as a divorced liberal without ethics, accusing him variously of fundraising on behalf of an executive with links to the Mafia, caring for the daughter of a South Korean fugitive from the FBI and supporting Hamas, the radical Palestinian group. For his part, Mr Torricelli, 45, has depicted the Republican as a surrogate of Newt Gingrich, the unpopular House Speaker, an ally of the tobacco companies and a politician whose key campaign strategist also has alleged ties to the Mob.

The claims and counter-claims with which both candidates have blanketed New Jersey were brought to a head last week in the studios of WHTV television in Trenton, where they met for the second of two public debates.

So bad has the feud become that neither man would shake hands, look the other in the eye, or attempt to engage the other in serious discourse about issues affecting their

electorate. "This is a last chance to raise the level of this debate, and this campaign. This is important for our state and a last chance for us," said Mr Torricelli before immediately accusing his opponent of dumping toxic waste in the Atlantic and voting against gun control. "Mr Zimmer cannot defend his record and instead this campaign has deteriorated into acrimony."

"It is not our advertisements that are negative, it is Bob Torricelli's record that is negative and the people of New Jersey have a right to know," Mr Zimmer retorted. In fact, while both candidates are desperate to portray the other as too radical for the moderate voters in this state, neither is viewed as extreme by his party. Mr Zimmer, a soft-spoken former corporate lawyer, is a fiscally conservative, pro-choice

Republican in the mould of the ever popular Christie Todd Whitman, the Governor of New Jersey. Mr Torricelli, a former aide to Vice-President Walter Mondale, has shown a conservative streak in voting for tough restrictions against illegal immigration.

Both are in the centre of their parties and they really aren't all that different," said Ross Baker, a political scientist at Rutgers University. "But they are transmuting molehills into mountains to gain votes."

If the Democrats are to have any hope of capturing the six Senate seats that currently keep the Republicans in power in the Senate, Mr Torricelli must win in New Jersey.

The only question for Mr Clinton, himself facing further sleaze allegations over political glad-handing with wealthy Indonesians, is how closely he will wish to be aligned with a candidate whose character is facing a daily pounding on the airwaves in the neighbouring conurbations of New York and Philadelphia.

Neither man would shake hands or look the other in the eye

TWA bomb theory is undermined by tests

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

METALLURGICAL tests have given rise to further suspicions that the TWA Flight 800 disaster was caused by mechanical failure rather than terrorism, but the truth is still unclear.

It was reported yesterday that scientists who examined the airliner's central fuel tank believe that the explosion which sent the jumbo jet plunging into the Atlantic in July, killing 230 people, was less dramatic than a bomb.

The difference is down to particulars of a second, but metallurgists who have studied the wreckage of the fuel tank told *The Washington Post* that the damage patterns were typical of a "low order" explosion. The direction in which the metal bent suggested that the source of the blast

was inside the fuel tank. It did not, said the newspaper, appear to indicate the use of plastic explosive.

Not everyone agrees, but the receding likelihood that terrorism brought down the Paris-bound plane is a dubious comfort. It simply raises questions of air safety, particularly on elderly Boeing 747s.

The latest twist in a baffling investigation, one which has seen myriad theories and countless "false starts" regarding the likelihood of sabotage, coincided with reports of progress by the US Navy search team which has worked steadily to recover wreckage from the crash. The navy said its scanners had located a new seam of Flight 800 debris, including up to 400 pieces of the aircraft.

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Elected heir of imperial dynasty can offer European Union a few tips on eastward expansion

New waltz for Habsburgs

VIENNA FILE
by ROGER BOYES



IF THE 20th century had taken a slightly different turn, Karl Habsburg would have been crowned prince of an empire straddling the centre of Europe. But, as fate had it, his distant relative Franz Ferdinand visited Sarajevo and was shot dead, so two world wars later Karl has to make do with being a newly elected Austrian deputy to the European Parliament.

It is not quite the same thing, as his 83-year-old father Otto von Habsburg — himself a veteran European deputy for the Bavarian Christian Social Union — no doubt warned him. Even so, the imperial genes could come in useful. The Austro-Hungarian empire had its own currency, its own brand of Eurocrats and, long before the Maastricht treaty, a plausible version of flexible federalism.

There may not be so much waltzing in Brussels but there are handy parallels with the Vienna of the Habsburgs. If nothing else, Karl should provide the Strasbourg Parliament with an authoritative voice on eastward enlargement: his grandfather's empire took in not only Hungarians but also Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, and others on the waiting list for the European Union.

The old joke told about Otto is still making the rounds for his son. Karl is told that there is a Austria-Hungary

football match. "Really? Who are we playing?" he asks. The 35-year-old former political science student has abandoned his dynastic pride. Like other members of his family — though not Uncle Felix, who was recently arrested when he tried to travel through Austria — he has renounced his claim to the imperial throne. During the European election campaign, however, he praised monarchical rule as a desirable system of government. Republics failed, he said, to "bring up sons and daughters to be future presidents". Monarchies were clearly ahead in this respect.

Karl is an arch-conservative but the general view of his compatriots is that he is quite harmless. The more dynamic person in the Habsburg household is probably Francesca, his wife. She studied art history in London and put in a stint at Sotheby's, and has helped to set up a restoration project to save threatened art in Eastern Europe.

In the view of Vienna coffee house sages, the Habsburgs are behaving with considerably more dignity than many of the Austrian nobility who are scrambling for the return of former estates in Central Europe. Every duke or count seems to be filing suit in the hope of reclaiming an ancestral home or a stretch of woodland.



Karl Habsburg, with wife, Francesca, and daughter, casts his ballot in Austria's election for the European Parliament last Sunday

Young Hitler 'was admirer of the Jews'

HITLER, it seems, had nothing personal against the Jews. That is the main finding of a well-researched book, *Hitler's Vienna* (Piper Publishing House, Munich), by Austrian historian Brigitte Hamann, who has debunked some of the myths about the Nazi leader's early days.

Historians in the past claimed that personal friction between Hitler and Austrian Jews sparked his hatred. In fact, Professor Hamann found that Hitler got on well with Jewish pupils at his school in Linz, that he admired Jewish actors in the Linz theatre, and in Vienna enthusiastically attended Wagner operas directed by Gustav Mahler, the Jewish conductor and composer.

Professor Hamann — having dug up old medical bills — also refutes the theory that he was enraged by the fees charged by a Jewish doctor who treated the cancer of Hitler's mother. Nor is it true that Jewish professors rejected his application to the Vienna Art Academy.

Professor Hamann argues that Hitler's anti-Semitism was pragmatic rather than personal — a mimicking of populist politicians such as Karl Luger, then Mayor of Vienna. Anti-Semitism was in the air and Hitler, as a politician on the make, sucked it in.

Art caught in pogrom row

REBECCA WHITEHEAD, the British sculptor, is at the centre of a row in Vienna. Next month, to mark the fifty-eighth anniversary of the Nazi pogroms, the city was due to unveil her white concrete cube memorial to the survivors of the Holocaust.

The sculpture was supposed to sit in the middle of Judenplatz, a baroque

square. In digging up the cobbled square — in the heart of Vienna's ancient ghetto — builders found traces of a medieval pogrom when the Viennese set ablaze the synagogue. Archaeologists consider the find to be more important than Whitehead's sculpture. Local residents, furious at losing their parking spaces, are also trying to stop the installation.

Italians buoyed by Kohl vow on entry to single currency

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

ROMANO PRODI, the Italian Prime Minister, reassured his compatriots yesterday after talks in Bonn that Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, "fully supported" the country's aspirations to join the single currency.

Signor Prodi said Herr Kohl had told him he saw "no obstacles to the re-entry of the lira into the exchange-rate mechanism (ERM), or to the lira joining the single currency".

But the German leader, who entertained Signor Prodi to dinner at the Chancellery in Bonn, did not commit himself to a timetable for Italian membership of economic and monetary union (EMU), and there is still speculation that Germany and France would prefer Italy and Spain to join the single currency "soon after" the starting date of January 1999 laid down in the Maastricht treaty. Herr Kohl met José María Aznar, the Spanish Prime Minister, for similar talks on Tuesday.

Signor Prodi said he expected the lira to re-enter the ERM — which it left with sterling in 1992 — "by the end of the

year". Italy would then comply with the Maastricht requirement that any currency joining EMU must have been in the ERM for two years beforehand. The Prime Minister said Herr Kohl had told him Germany wanted "a strong Italian presence in European institutions". *La Repubblica* said their meeting "was all dear Helmut, dear Romano".

There is, nonetheless, continuing disquiet in Italy over the insistence by Hans Tietmeyer, the Bundesbank chairman, that currencies joining EMU must have a "stable and durable" track record, and that budgetary "window-dressing" will be disallowed. The budget adopted by the Prodi Cabinet three weeks ago and now being debated by parliament is designed to cut the huge public deficit partly through spending cuts but also by revenue-raising measures, including a highly unpopular property tax, a vague "Euro tax", and unspecified "Treasury operations".

Il Messaggero noted that Ulrich Cartellieri, of Deutsche Bank, had said this week that EMU would commence in 1999 with Germany, France, the Benelux countries, Ireland and Austria, "but not initially with the Mediterranean nations". The paper said: "Herr Cartellieri evidently has an Italian name but Germanic determination."

Emma Marcegaglia, head of the Young Industrialists section of Confindustria, the Italian equivalent of the Confederation of British Industry, said that the Prodi budget failed to tackle structural problems and would cripple businesses rather than encourage growth. "We may get into Europe, but as a moribund country," she said.



Tietmeyer is opposed to weak economies joining

French phones ring millennial changes

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

MORE than 3,500 technicians were on hand to field an avalanche of queries from baffled French telephone customers last night when the country's eight-figure numbers gained a further two digits.

The change, which came into effect at 11pm French time, will expand the volume of possible numbers from 60 million to 470 million and increase the country's capacity for mobile telephones and computer modems.

It will create a stock of numbers lasting until the middle of the next century. Under the new system France has been divided into five regions, each with a new double-digit prefix for domestic calls. Paris numbers now have the prefix 01, when calling within France. Numbers in the northwest are 02, the northeast 03, the southeast and Corsica 04 and the southwest 05. To call a French number from outside France, the first zero must be omitted.

In a report this month, the French Finance Ministry said that the use of personal computers, faxes and mobile telephones was being restricted by the limited supply of telephone numbers. France is

adding new telephone lines at the rate of one million a year and France Télécom predicted that, without extra numbers, the demand for lines would have outstripped availability as early as next year.

"It was the only way to confront the saturation that we were facing in the short term," said Jean Pierre Poitevin, the France Télécom project director. As of last night's change there were nearly eight telephone numbers potentially available for every man, woman and child in France.

Michel Bon, president of France Télécom, said yesterday he had "no fear" that the move to a ten-digit system would cause problems, adding "this is an operation that has been three years in the planning".

But just in case, a campaign to explain the new system has been under way for the past six months, with advertisements on television, radio and in the press.

French telephone addicts were reassured to learn that if they happened to be talking on the telephone at the stroke of 11pm last night, they would not be cut off by the system in mid-conversation.

THE SUNDAY TIMES



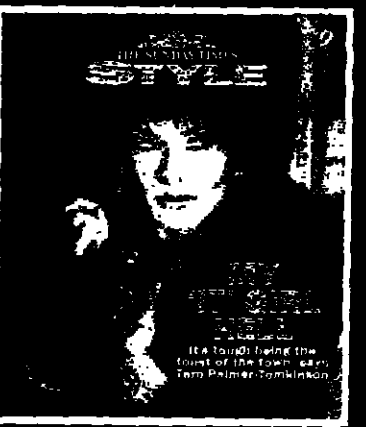
THE MAGAZINE

Elaine Paige's long, show-stopping journey from *Barnet* to *Broadway*



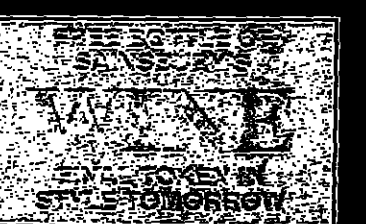
THE CULTURE

Rhoda Koenig is bewildered by Britain's fascination with Arthur Miller



STYLE

Why being the hottest thing in town can sometimes leave a girl feeling cold



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OPINION

Our greatest violinist turns into a pop pundit — and Mrs Bottomley rivals Mystic Meg



DANCE

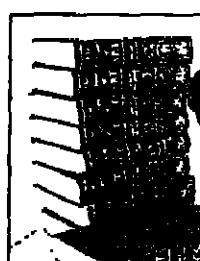
A night of dodgy tango opens the new Sadler's Wells season at the Peacock Theatre

THE TIMES ARTS



POP

Still rooted in the Sixties, Donovan provides a little mellow entertainment for Camden Town



ON MONDAY

With 26 million words, the new Dictionary of Art will be the publishing event of the decade

Readers who have nothing better to think about may recall that Dr Jack Cunningham, the Shadow Heritage Secretary, was recently chastised in this column. The reason? After a mere 16 years of preparing for government, the Labour Party appeared to have no cultural policy whatsoever.

I now realise that I was unfair. Even as I wrote, great thoughts were being formed. And this week Dr Jack introduced something called the "creative economy" — which I assumed meant plumbers demanding to be paid in cash, but in fact turns out to be Labour's arts strategy. Let's hear about it in Dr Jack's own words:

"I have chosen five key objectives for a leisure strategy. They are: to encourage and enable creative talent; to promote greater access and participation; to build and nurture new audiences; to reverse Britain's declining share in world tourism; and to promote a 'sport for all' policy."

Amazing. How many spin-doc-

Top of the waffle charts this month

tors, researchers, brainstorming sessions and "widespread consultations" did it take to come up with that mind-numbing waste of oxygen? No wonder that Dr Jack wins our Waffle of the Week award.

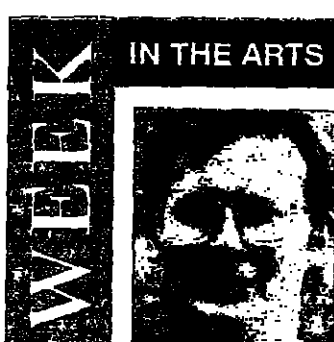
Here are some other outstanding contributions to the cultural arena in the past seven days:

Loony visionary of the week: To prove that this is a non-partisan column, we bestow this accolade on Dr Jack's opposite number, Virginia Bottomley. This week the incurably jolly Mrs B told a bemused audience at the Royal Society of Arts that "in a few years we will perhaps be able to look at the Getty Museum's collection, in hologram, in the middle of our living room".

Well, I don't know about your living room, and I certainly haven't had the pleasure of a

bracing *soirée* round at Chateau Bottomley. But I'm not sure how I would fit a hologram of the Getty collection into mine. Could we squeeze the Roman mosaics between the telly and the big pot plant, and shove the Old Masters next to that ghastly Bakelite clock which my wife snapped up (Getty-style) from a car-boot sale? It seems unlikely. Still, the promise of "a priceless art collection (in hologram form) in every British home by the millennium" might just swing a tight election.

Dubious notion of the week: The Society of London Theatre tells us that a show called *Titanic: The Musical* may hit the West End next year. Tasteless? You said it. But considering how many musicals turn into disasters, I guess it makes a kind of sense to turn a disaster into a musical.



RICHARD MORRISON

Working mum of the week: The American film director Allison Anders gives her *child-minder* a credit at the end of her new movie, *Grace of My Heart*. Who, I wonder, will be the first babysitter

to be thanked by some over-wrought Oscar winner?

Sad author of the week: According to a list of hardback book sales to appear in *The Times* next week, Graham Swift's Booker Prize shortlisted novel, *Last Orders*, sold precisely three copies in the 600 monitored bookshops last week. Perhaps he should rename it "Any More Orders, Please". Or perhaps he should ask his publisher some searching questions.

Waste of the week: Last night, Nigel Kennedy made his debut as a Top of the Pops presenter. Yes, the prodigy whose performance of Elgar's Violin Concerto once moved even this stony countenance to something approaching emotion is now reduced to spouting bursts of blather between Boyzone and the Boo Radleys. Has

he no kind friend who can lead him gently back to his fiddle? Or will Nige drift through the rest of his life in a fog of self-imposed mediocrity, much to the irritation of those of us who have no choice but to be average.

Postmodern chic of the week: The Institute of Contemporary Arts, which is given £815,000 by the Arts Council each year so that it can be at the "cutting edge" of all that's pretentious, is hosting a conference next Saturday devoted to James Bond. Fashion gurus will earnestly debate 007's changing wardrobe. A "collector of Bond memorabilia" will talk about "Bond and Obsession": a design expert will discuss "Bond and Architecture"; and a London University professor will speak about "Bond and new technology". No folks: it's not April 1 — just the

wacky world of subsidised arts. Which brings us to...

Quango of the week: Step forward the London Arts Board — all 272 of you. According to the LAB's latest report, it has 37 full-time officers, 15 board members and a remarkable 220 "advisers and assessors". No wonder that the chairman of this merry multitude, Clive Priestley, writes that the LAB's "two main tasks are administration and the exercise of influence". Since many of the 220 advisers and assessors are people who benefit from the LAB's own grants, I should imagine that influence is being exercised very nicely, thank you.

There are no fewer than ten such regional arts boards in England — plus hundreds of other "advisers" who sit on the national arts council's numerous committees. No wonder that the fastest growing artform in the subsidised cultural world is inertia. Jack Cunningham should fit in well if he becomes arts minister.

Still mad about saffron

DONOVAN cannot, it seems, escape his past: a recent tour of America had to be cancelled because he could not get a visa in account of a 25-year-old drug conviction. And, to be honest, he does not sound like a man desperately trying to break free from the shackles of the 1960s.

As he stood on stage in the Britpop capital of Camden Town, just one man and his guitar, it was hard to think of any other artist who has

changed so little over 30 years. Donovan is forever mellow yellow, the sunshine superman incarnate who is still trying to catch the wind.

True, the Happy Mondays borrowed a few of his trippier tunes and named a 1990s drug anthem in his honour, and the very fashionable Rick Rubin produced his new album, *Sunrider*. But the man himself remains unmoved by the passing vagaries of musical fashion. His new label makes a virtue of this, talking not of some brave new direction but "the resumption of a journey, a magic that is about to be felt again".

And, yes, there was a certain magic in the air. He sang songs from the new album full of all the classic Donovan hallmarks — gentle folk melodies, a voice that quivers with sincerity and lyrics full of benedictions, mystical invocations and tributes to Mother Earth. But it was the 1960s troubadour the sell-out crowd had come to hear and he knew it too.

He played all of the oldies with panache and affection, starting with *Catch the Wind* and working his way through *Hurdy Gurdy Man* and *Colours to Sunshine Superman* and *Mellow Yellow*. There was none of that weary supercilious disdain for the old favourites; instead they were treated like much-loved children now grown up in years but in the mind's eye still cowering innocently in some golden nursery of youth.

No matter that he still sounds the same after all these years. Better than becoming a parody of yourself, like Bob Dylan, his one-time inspiration. Some might call it fossilisation. The crowd on Wednesday night would have called it maintaining integrity in a fickle old world.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

DANCE: Debra Craine on a trial by tango at Sadler's Wells's fill-in home



"Less like seductive coupling and more like tedious duty": Miguel Angel Zotto and Milena Plebs of Tango Por Dos

Cry, Argentina

While one set of builders was demolishing the old Sadler's Wells, another was frantically working to get its temporary home up and running in time for its opening on Wednesday night. In the event, things weren't quite ready but, after a little pep talk from Ian Albery, chief executive of Sadler's Wells, the curtain duly rose at the Peacock.

Owned by the London School of Economics, the Peacock (formerly known as the Royalty) will be home to the Sadler's Wells organisation for the next two years, while a new £38 million theatre is constructed on the company's Islington site. The Peacock is doing double duty, as an LSE lecture hall by day and as a West End lyric theatre by night. Sadler's Wells will manage the Peacock for the next decade; after the new Sadler's Wells opens in 1998 the Peacock will be used, among other things, as a West End transfer for the Wells's more successful productions. The LSE, meanwhile, has

applied for lottery funding to completely refurbish the Peacock, both front of house and backstage.

It certainly needs it. The auditorium, built in 1960, is shabby and grim: the bars and public areas are tacky. But a start has been made. The theatre has an enlarged orchestra pit and the new box office and main foyer, with their clean white spaciousness, hint at better things to come. And, once inside the 1,000-seat auditorium, the attractions of the Peacock become apparent — great sightlines and a lovely wide stage.

The Peacock opened with the kind of popular dance show this venue is likely to encourage. One trusts, though, that future offerings will be better than *Tango Por Dos*. The company is run by Miguel Angel Zotto and Milena Plebs, the stars of

Tango Argentino, which was a massive hit a few years back. Their show, *Perfumes de Tango*, promises to evoke the "particular magic of a Buenos Aires tango club".

There is not much likelihood of that in this dull cabaret. You would be hard-pressed to catch a whiff of the tango's lowlife origins in the back streets of Buenos Aires. The basic instincts manifested in the dance form here look less like seductive coupling and more like tedious

affair with Hollywood in the 1920s, and its modern emergence and updating. The couples are glued together cheek to cheek, the men in their suits and fedoras, the women in their slit skirts, fishnet stockings and high heels. But there isn't a lot you can do with the tango's limited vocabulary except dance it with fire. And that's just what you won't find in this tired and spiritless show.

The urgency of the tango's raw expression has been tamed into timidity: the vignettes of passion, death and betrayal are all colourless. The show encompasses a variety of tango styles, from its early rhythmic incarnation of machismo swagger through to its emergence in the tango halls of Buenos Aires and the ballrooms of Europe, its love

Tango's raw expression has been tamed into timidity

WATERPROOF WINDPROOF BREATHABLE



Party pieces

RECITAL

Tan and Friends Wigmore Hall

ONE birthday celebration for Melvyn Tan, who was 40 on Sunday, was a concert on the previous night which brought us Tan the born-again pianist in newfound enthusiasm for the modern concert grand, as well as the long-established specialist on the fortepiano.

With his keyboard colleague Ronald Brautigam he shared a wittily pointed and ebullient account of Poulenc's *Sonata for Four Hands* at One Piano, perhaps just a shade brusque in delivery.

The same pair encompassed a wider variety in six pieces from Bizet's *Jour d'enfants*, from the fizzily spinning *La Toupie* and the quietly creepy *Colin-Maillard* to the exuberance of the final *Galop*. On his own, and on the modern piano, Tan gave a poetic insight into Chopin's *Three Nocturnes*, Op 9, heavy on the rubato at times, but with a sensibility to phrase and fingering that brought its own reward.

The pianist might have been better advised to bring forward the modern piano instead of the fortepiano for Anne Sofie von Otter in five Schubert songs. She sang them with a beguiling beauty of tone and warm understanding, notably the depth of feeling she brought to *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt*, and the ironic character of *Die Männer sind mechanisch*, but the fortepiano tone did seem to impart a curiously blunt accompaniment.

It was better suited to Mendelssohn's often garrulous D major Sonata, Op 58, in which Steven Isserlis shared a lively give-and-take of melody and harmony with the keyboard, and kept the virtuosic element under firm control. At least the cellist was more worthily engaged in this than inflicting on us transcriptions of three Lennon/McCartney numbers, the triviality of which was made to sound more musically barren without words.

Four hands at one fortepiano were featured in three *Marches Militaires* D733, by Schubert, where the crisp articulation of the keyboard imparted a rhythm and colour to the music that made its basically simple character sound a clarion call to attention at the start of a programme of strangely mixed content, even for a birthday.

NOEL GOODWIN

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Alistair Horne asks if a Bonapartist victory at Waterloo would have led to a European superstate under Franco-German hegemony

What if Napoleon had won?

There are already more than 300,000 titles on Napoleon on the shelves. So why be so rash as to add yet another to the list? One of the principal reasons a historian has for writing books is to inform himself, and I like to think my recent study of Napoleon may have taught me a few things — not only about Boney himself, but about the shape of modern Europe, too. While re-exploring the story of that silliest of conflicts, the War of 1812 between Britain and America, a most alarming penny dropped.

In November, 1814, the Duke of Wellington had been invited to take over Britain's unsuccessful armies in North America. Disapproving strongly of the war, he refused. The fighting against those former colonialists ended in a draw a few weeks later. But if he had taken a different view, or if the Americans had been efficient enough seriously to threaten Canada, then Wellington could well have been 3,000 miles away when Napoleon launched his supreme bid against the Allies in June 1815. What then? As he famously declared, even with the Iron Duke there, the day had

indeed been "the nearest-run thing you ever saw".

Without Wellington at the helm, the Prussian commander, Blücher, would almost certainly not have made his famous eccentric move to support his allies that June, and — with equal certainty — Waterloo would have been lost. On the other hand, such a victory would not have ensured Napoleon's ultimate triumph. Austrians and Germans were already moving towards France, and a second battle, or perhaps several, would probably have followed Waterloo. But even if that conflict had ended in defeat for Napoleon (by no means certain) it would have been a continental and not a British victory. What followed would, therefore, have been not a Pax Britannica, but a peace dominated by Metternich's Central European powers.

There is an (apocryphal) anecdote about a British dignitary

interviewing Chairman Mao. He asked the Chinese leader what might have happened if, instead of President Kennedy, his Soviet counterpart Khrushchev had been assassinated. Mao reflected a while, then replied: "It's hard to tell. But I don't suppose Mr Onassis would have married Mrs Khrushchev."

What if can be a dangerous game, but hard to resist. If, in 1803 Napoleon could have hung on to French Louisiana — then larger than the United States — instead of selling it off for a mere \$12 million, it could ultimately have confirmed France as the world's number one power. But would a Pitt or a Castlereagh have permitted that?

Again, if Napoleon had not won so resoundingly at Austerlitz in 1805, might there have been no Waterloo ten years later? And what if he had won definitively, without a replay, at Mont St Jean in 1815? In an article in *The Spectator* of

March 23, 1996, entitled *Napoleon or the Kaiser: Choose, Norman Stone*, Professor of Modern History at Oxford, speculated exactly thus. Lucien Bonaparte, he thought, would have been made King of Scotland, Joseph King of England; a guillotine would have been set up in Whitehall; Oxford — Stone's fancy ran free — would have (perhaps rather usefully) been turned into a school of military engineering and medicine. He gleefully speculated that the Dean of Christchurch, joining the Resistance, would have been "bayoneted by Polish troops stabling their horses in the cathedral".

Marginally, Professor Stone reckoned it would have been better to be defeated by Napoleon than by the Kaiser. In the long run, it would possibly even have proved beneficial; at least we would have had good trains, "sensible property laws and decent schools". (He makes no mention of the cuisine).

Rather more seriously, a young historian about to make his name in Cambridge, G. M. Trevelyan, tackled exactly the same theme some 90 years ago. Aged 31, the future Master of Trinity and OM won a prize for a competition in the *Westminster Gazette* in July 1907 with an essay entitled *If Napoleon had won the Battle of Waterloo*.

His starting point was the signature of the "Convention of Brussels" in June 1815, whereby a defeated Wellington was offered the same generous terms to "evacuate the seat of war" which the French had been accorded at Cintra seven years previously. During the Peninsular War, Napoleon — "a mere shadow, in spiritual and intellectual form, of his former self" — was overwhelmed by the cries for "peace" that ran down the ranks of his exhausted army, and was persuaded to propose a pact of "unexpected clemency" to England. Aided by a "time-serving", Teu-

tonic Prince Metternich, his aim — almost Gaullist in its modernity — was simply to remove paymaster Britain "from the scene of affairs and from councils of the continental monarchs". The result — as sketched out by young Trevelyan — was to be a Europe remarkably akin to the dreams of a Jacques Delors, with France dominant, the Germans remaining "the quietest and most loyal of all Napoleon's subjects" (remember this was written seven years before 1914), and Britain isolated.

In the ensuing years of peace, in an impoverished Britain "distress grew yearly more intolerable, among both the rural and industrial populations". Then, in 1825, there broke out "the ill-advised but romantic rebellion of Lord Byron". "Savage reprisals of government established the blood feud between one half of England and the other. Byron's execution made as great a noise in the world as any event

since the Fall of the Bastille... The writings of Shelley, especially after his long imprisonment, obtained a popularity which was one of the most curious symptoms of the time."

This bloodthirsty but pleasing fantasy of one of Britain's most distinguished historians closed with Napoleon dying in 1826 of a kind of Alzheimer's-like premature senility, enjoying delusions that Josephine was still alive.

Whatever the precise details of a British defeat in 1815, by extension, Trevelyan's thesis conjures up a prospect of Britain, marginalised from Europe, pushed inevitably by the dictates of commerce into bed with a suspiciously isolationist America — a scenario not very far off that of today's Euro-sceptics. Would it have given the world 100 years of peace? Somehow, I rather doubt it; but then I have never been much impressed by the *Wellenschauning* of your average Euro-sceptic.

The author's How Far from Austerlitz? Napoleon 1805-1815 is published by Macmillan on November 8.

Parliament's devilish bad act

Like most hasty laws, the handgun ban is tyrannical

Imagine that last spring a pack of dangerous dogs broke into an infant school and killed 16 children. By now every rotweiler in the land would be dead and the ownership of such dogs would be illegal. Imagine that a drunk driver swept through 16 child cyclists at night on an unlit road. Drunk driving would by now be an imprisonable offence and a lower age limit would be imposed on highway cycling.

More children die each year from dangerous dogs and drunk drivers than die from handgun wounds in a decade. Yet dogs and drunks usually kill people one at a time. Serial accidents do not evoke public emotion. Without that emotion governments find it strangely hard to act.

The dervishes have danced out their week on the handgun issue. Now let plodding Sanity take the stage. First, the Government is not to stop 80 per cent of all handguns in private possession. It is to declare them illegal, which is quite different. Governments declare many things illegal. That does not make them vanish. "Banned drugs" are everywhere, as are prohibited immigrants. The relationship between a law and its effect is as tenuous as between King Canute and the tide. Thousands of handguns in Britain are already illegal. They are in the hands of crooks, not gun clubs. These ones are for terrorising and killing people, not shooting at targets. I doubt whether any of those will be surrendered.

Sweep aside emotion and the question for any legislator is the same. Does the increase in public safety outweigh the infringement on personal freedom? Anyone who has ploughed through the *Dunblane* story will realise that this tragedy was not due to a serious deficiency in the law, rather in its implementation. There were enough warnings about Hamilton's behaviour for his licence to be revoked. They were not heeded. No law can offer the public protection if it is not both enforceable and enforced.

The tendency nowadays is for government to deny any such blame and instead de-

mand "additional powers", invariably ones that restrict the liberty of the individual. I thought this week's Cullen report on Dunblane was a sensible document, which tried to balance the present public hostility towards gun ownership against a need for controls to work in practice. Swayed by public emotion and the peril to the Scottish Secretary's marginal seat (which includes Dunblane), the Cabinet rejected Cullen.

Instead, it has plunged into a Dutch auction of legislative fervour. The Scottish Nationalists have outbid Lord Cullen. The Scottish Office has outbid the Home Office. The Labour Party has outbid everybody.

Anyone who thought New Labour should have seen the Blackpool conference platform given to Ann Pearson of the Dunblane Snowdrop Petition. Michael Howard's failure (so far) to ban 22 competition

pistols at gun clubs was described by Snowdrop as "implying a willingness to tolerate another Hungerford or Dunblane".

The nation is bound to show collective sympathy to the bereaved after an accident. When communities are traumatised we feel the need for collective grief. But sympathy is one thing. Seeking to win political points by exaggerating government's ability to stop further horrors is dangerous. The 1987 Hungerford shootings did not involve a school, which is why little was done afterwards. Dunblane tapped a deep well of emotion. There is something frightening about a political system that responds only to emotion, not to reason. It reminds us how close we still are to lynching laws.

Thus a letter in Thursday's *Times* implied that the real lesson of Dunblane is that single men with apparently homosexual inclinations should not be allowed near boys' clubs. And how are they to be found out and stopped? The police would be given "the means to deal with those, such as Hamilton, who cloak their obsessions under the guise of an interest in the welfare of young people". After Dunblane, many might cry Amen.

Lives might be saved if we banned all cars and danger-



ous dogs. We do not do so. In Snowdrop's terms "we just let children die". Lives would certainly be saved if we banned all guns, especially shotguns. I cannot see why anyone "needs" to own a shotgun, to get pleasure from firing it at a live and inoffensive bird. I am told that shooting birds is an exhilarating encounter with nature and gives pleasure to many Tory MPs. The Government regards targeting birds, rabbits or deer as a legitimate reason for "needing" a gun, but not targeting cardboard. Some people, vets, policemen, farmers, need a pistol. I am tempted to ask, why this concern for cardboard but not birds? Handguns are widely used in crime, but most of these are illegal already, and will be untouched by the new law. The real killer is the shotgun. In 1995 there were 83 accidental deaths, suicides and homicides attributable to shotguns. The equivalent figure for handguns was four.

I wonder what would have been the reaction had Hamilton staged his massacre with a pump-action shotgun or a sporting rifle. I bet there would be no rush to ban shotguns — merely a cosmetic "tightening of control". Westminster would have cried, "Guns don't kill people, people do". A huge and lucrative industry depends on shotguns and sporting rifles. Both are weapons designed to kill. So are the flick-knives freely on sale in London, despite the comments of the police at the trial of Philip Lawrence's murderer this week. Because handgun shooting is a largely proletarian sport, it is an easy sacrifice on the altar of Dunblane.

Incidents such as Hungerford and Dunblane are so rare and so awful as to form a poor basis for legislation. They will occur again, perhaps with a shot gun or a rifle. There is no law that can be written against the cunning homicidal maniac. Will today's legislators hang their heads as an appalled public demands to know why these weapons were not also banned in 1996? No, they will

say a ban would have been "unrealistic".

I feel no particular sympathy for the handgun lobby. Some occupations may need dangerous weapons, but I am baffled by the machismo that turns using them into a source of pleasure, whether the target is birds, animals, clays or cardboard. But I am not a shooter, and my objection presumably holds against fencing and archery. If shooters can assure the public that their pleasure is harmless, then live and let live. Claiming that handguns are a menace and shotguns harmless is ludicrous.

The implication of this affair is clear. If there was a reason for criminalising gun ownership after Dunblane there was a reason before it. Policy cannot be based on one crazed killer's choice of weapon. Yet Parliament bows to a random incident and a bout of hysteria, and finds a weak lobby to hold scapegoat. A legislature is rotten that lurches into action only when goaded by acts of God — or in this case the Devil.

Angelica Goodden on the decline of royal patronage

Kings collect art, not stamps

To anyone visiting the Tate Gallery's new Grand Tour exhibition, it is hard to believe that the British were regularly accused of philistinism in the 18th century. But they were, despite their enthusiasm for the antique and for the best of modern painting; and outside observers often begrudged the fact that the British could afford to buy so much, when they were clearly unable to appreciate it. If your own country was on the brink of revolution, it was infuriating to see the product of decades of British stability being spent on pictures you were forced to sell because you desperately needed cash.

The British Royal Family appeared much keener to patronise art than it does now, even though constitutional monarchies were thought not to need to show off as much as absolute ones did. They still required prestige, which is probably why George III made some spectacular bulk purchases of art: the royal collection would be without all its Canalettos, Longhairs and other Grand Tour favourites had there not been an art-loving Consul in Venice to pass his collection on to the King. George IV became the greatest royal collector since Charles I, and persuaded his Government to create the National Gallery — long after other countries — as well as helping to secure the Elgin Marbles for the British Museum. But the splendid objects he amassed made him no more popular with his people, who had criticised his wild extravagance as a young man, and went on criticising.

It is unthinkable that a reflowering of art patronage might regain for the Crown the prestige it has lost over the last decade. But perhaps the monarchy has too easily abandoned the notion that courts presuppose elitism and splendour, in favour of courting popular approval. At least some modern republicans might be quietened if the Crown's still considerable wealth were channelled into artistic patronage. Instead, that wealth is used to support extravagant royal lifestyles, while people grudgingly pay to inspect the fruits of past royal patronage in Buckingham Palace or Windsor Castle and elsewhere.

The question, rather, is whether those who have the resources to impose such values should not try harder to do so — not merely to furnish a dolls' house with miniature paintings by leading artists of the day, as Queen Mary did, but to buy full-scale paintings, display them to public view, and thereby attempt to educate and refine taste. The British monarchy in the 20th century has been both a promoter and victim of bourgeois values — a paradox which now, as its own bourgeois values are found wanting, must make it yearn for the days of distant regality.

The rot set in with George V and stamp-collecting, to which he devoted three afternoons a week when he was in London. In philatelic terms, of course, the value of the 325 albums he left is incalculable. George VI continued his father's hobby, and his descendants have ensured that their stamp collection remains the greatest in the world. But what philately in comparison with art? It may be true that ordinary people can identify more fully with stamp-collecting than with picture-buying (now the preserve of very rich popular composers and advertising tycoons), and have little time to worry about the value of the liberal arts.

Supporting the people's choice may have wretched consequences: whether it means spending money on indifferent and retrograde architecture — the Prince of Wales's model village — or saving money by not patronising art. We are surely diminished as a nation by monarchs and monarchs-in-waiting who would not dream of building and furnishing a Carlton House, or employing a Nash to transform Brighton Pavilion, or otherwise rebut the old accusation of British philistinism. Even fewer can today afford to create a modern Grand Tour of Art than could afford to go on the Grand Tour in the 18th century, but those who can might at least share their treasures with the nation. Then the impoverished British could appear as exalted by art as the moneyed British managed to do 200 years ago, returning with all their booty from the years abroad.

The author is a fellow of St Hilda's College, Oxford.

Island fling

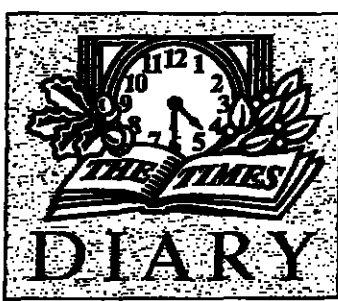
CYPRUS is to receive its first official visit from a British Foreign Secretary since it declared independence in 1960. At the end of November, Malcolm Rifkind will visit both Greek and Turkish representatives. About time, too, say the locals, who have grown tired of Britain neglecting them, despite it being one of the guarantors of Cypriot independence.

In 1983, Baroness Young, then a Foreign Office Minister, paid a visit to Cyprus a couple of months before Rauf Denktaş declared independence in the north of the island for the Turkish Republic of Cyprus. In 1993, both John Major and Douglas Hurd visited Nicosia for a Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. But these visits were stop-offs without any official function.

The Foreign Office blames the difficulty of reaching a political settlement for the 36-year gap between official visits. Now Rifkind has bumped the island up his shopping list, hoping that these forthcoming talks will catalyse Cyprus's tentative moves towards EU accession.

Goodbye!

NIGEL DEMPSTER, the *Daily Mail* gossip columnist, may be considered the greatest living Englishman but his name is no guarantee of success. The glossy magazine branded after him,



Dempsters, has folded after just two issues.

Exclusive, gushing interviews with the Duchess of York, praising her extraordinary taste, were the magazine's stock in trade, but they failed to capture the imagination of readers. Dempster this week distanced himself from the magazine, maintaining that he simply lent his name to the enterprise.

Neville Shulman, editor of the short-lived glossy, was shell-shocked: "I don't know whether there's going to be another issue or not," he stammered. "You'd better ask someone else." But there was no one to turn to.

Ever keen to show themselves to be the party of Everyman, the *Referendum Party* have chosen their

colours well: cream and maroon, exactly the same colours as Sir James Goldsmith's private Boeing 757 jet.

Meritocracy

BRITAIN'S Polish community is throwing back vodka and slapping its thighs in celebration over an award to the Duke of Kent, a man tipped by its more romantic members as a future king of their country.

After the unveiling of a portrait of the Duke by society dauber Basha Kaczmarowska Hamilton this week, the Polish Ambassador, His Excellency Ryszard Stempowski, announced that the Duke had been awarded the Polish Grand Cross of the Order of Merit. This was in recognition of "His Royal Highness's amicable disposition towards the Poles".

As Lord Bethell points out in *The Times* Magazine today, General Wladyslaw Sikorski in 1939 proposed making the Duke of Kent's father King of Poland as a symbolic bond to stiffen resistance to Hitler. The Poles used to elect their kings, and the present duke, who has been taking Polish lessons, is now being mooted as a possible candi-



Heather McCartney: potty date. The Grand Cross of the Order of Merit is but a stepping stone.

In a spin

ANOTHER McCartney is making her way in the world of the arts, this time plastic rather than musical arts. Heather McCartney, eldest daughter of Paul, former Beatle, and Linda, the vegans' Billy Graham, has just launched her

own company in New York. She plans to make pots "in the age-old way of coiling... by hand".

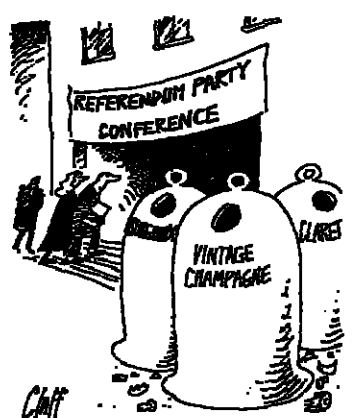
The ambitious Miss McCartney, who evidently wants to do for the pottery of the Tarahumara and Huichol tribes of Mexico, her main influences, what her father did for the Mersey beat, says: "My aim is to make my pottery available to homes all over the world."

Catwalk King

TOM KING, former Secretary for Defence, has taken up modelling. Looking relaxed in a sweater, he has been posing for a catalogue for a smart King's Road shop called Brora, which sells Scottish wools. The item he is modelling so tastefully with a springer spaniel called Bonnie nestling under his arm, is a light-green cashmere V-neck, a colour described as "Lovat". "He is my sister's godfather," says Victoria Stapleton, the proprietor of the shop, by way of explaining her exalted model. King himself considers his dog to be the star. "I was really in a supporting role to Bonnie," he says.



Tom King: jumper man





IT'S BAD TO STALK

But the law needs very careful drafting

Nobody doubts the genuine distress that a stalker intent upon intimidating his (or occasionally her) victim can inflict. Until now, it has been hard to secure criminal convictions for stalkers: the prosecution has had to prove either that the stalker intended to harass the victim or that the victim suffered psychological grievous bodily harm. A well drafted law against stalking could make successful prosecution easier, but a badly drafted one could have serious unintended consequences.

The new laws against stalking proposed yesterday by the Home Office Minister, David Maclean, have the merit of offering a graduated series of responses to the problem of stalking. First, a new civil remedy is offered under which a victim could gain an injunction against a stalker. Then there are two criminal offences. The less serious — "the use of words or behaviour, on more than one occasion, which would cause the victim to be harassed, alarmed or distressed" — carries a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment or a £5,000 fine or both. The more serious — putting the victim in fear of violence — could lead to five years' in jail and an unlimited fine.

With all attempts, however worthy, to create a new crime, legislators should first ensure that innocent people will not suffer as a result. The dangers of creating a stalking offence are threefold: that those going legitimately about their business will be caught in the net, that people will be vengefully accused of stalking, or that their motives will be misinterpreted.

As a newspaper, we are concerned that journalists investigating a story in the public interest could be caught by this legislation. As presently drafted, there will be a defence of "acting reasonably and necessarily in

pursuit of a business, trade or profession, or other lawful activity". It is to be hoped that reporters will not have to be taken to court and acquitted before the police accept that there is no ground for arrest.

There is also a chance that a vindictive "victim" will accuse someone else of stalking as an act of revenge. Attention which might well have been welcome could suddenly be claimed to be harassment. Courts will need to demand evidence that victims made their displeasure clear to the "stalker".

The third danger is that criminals will be made out of harmless, lovesick people who cannot resist going to places where they hope to catch sight of their beloved, or who bombard them with flowers or gifts under the genuine impression that their target will eventually capitulate. At one end of this spectrum of behaviour is the besotted adolescent, in the middle is the slightly creepy obsessive, and at the far end is the determined stalker. Drawing the line in the right place may prove extremely difficult.

One remedy would be for the police to issue a "yellow card" warning to alleged stalkers before embarking on any further action. This would have the merit of avoiding the cumbersome machinery of the court, while alerting the lovesick that, even if they mean no harm, their victim is suffering as a consequence of their actions. In cases of false accusation, it would give the person concerned a chance to break contact with the accuser before being branded a criminal.

Because there is all-party consensus on the need for a law against stalking, there is a risk that legislation will be rushed through Parliament without sufficient consideration. Even if MPs agree on the principle, they should think hard about the practical application of such a Bill.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The American presidential debates have shown their merit

Most US political commentators have pronounced themselves somewhat dissatisfied with the short set of presidential debates that ended this week in San Diego. They claim the public knows no more about what either man would do in office if elected than beforehand. The discussions are said to have been dull: no candidate has produced a dramatic new policy, launched a blistering attack, coined a memorable new slogan or committed a hugely embarrassing error.

The American people, however, are rather more appreciative than the political elite. Tens of millions continue to watch despite the dozens of alternative attractions provided by the US television industry. Voting citizens regard them as a real opportunity to compare their prospective leaders and decide how comfortable they would be with one or other in the Oval Office. Largely by mass expectation, every election since 1976 has included at least one presidential debate. By popular demand they are now institutionalised.

Despite the protestations of the pundits, the gathering in San Diego told us a great deal about the election of 1996. But it did so through an unusual medium, the audience themselves. The California debate was conducted as a "town meeting" with a representative sample of electors providing the questions. What they asked, or did not ask, throws much light on the reasons why President Clinton is cruising to re-election despite a record in office that can be fairly described as mixed.

Not a single citizen wanted answers on the various scandals that have dogged the First Couple and the Administration, to the evident frustration of Robert Dole who would have dearly loved the debate to be cast in those terms. The issues of abortion and welfare reform — which so galvanised

activists at the two national conventions — were almost invisible. Only one participant raised a matter of foreign relations, and that related to the security of Israel. Mr Dole would have welcomed more. Even the economy had a modest profile, reflecting broad satisfaction with the President's status quo and renders Americans unwilling to adopt the Dole-Kemp tax cuts. Possibly more encouraging for Republicans, who fear a big Clinton win might assist Democrats on Capitol Hill, Congress was not mentioned by the assembled voters.

Instead, it was the mainstream matters of domestic politics that dominated the proceedings. The future of Social Security, Medicare, the state of the US health sector, and employment law, figured strongly. In all these instances, the President stressed the popular position he had taken in the budget battle of 1995, while Mr Dole struggled to remind voters how much they had disliked the policies Bill Clinton had pursued in 1993 and 1994. If, as seems likely, the President wins by a comfortable margin, this debate will have provided a neat snapshot of the public mood that made it possible.

The American experience should provide ammunition for those who would like to see British party leaders meet in a similar format. If there is a problem with the US example, it is that the election season is almost the only time when debates of this sort happen. Inevitably, therefore, they are rather stilted in style. If, as we are regularly told, the House of Commons is the finest example of a deliberative chamber democracy has yet produced, then our televised product should be of a more vigorous nature. Even if voters learnt nothing new about their leaders, it would be worth the experiment to see what new could be discovered about themselves.

HALF TERM REPORT

The new time to pack the suitcases and the motorways

It is half-term, and there is gridlock on the roads. The cases are packed, and so are the airports. And for the next week, secretaries across the country will have their inventiveness tested as they try to explain the absence of the managing director, the chief accountant and most of the board members who are on what might be called an extended youth seminar — or, more accurately, taking the kids away for the half-term break. The ancient feast of Michaelmas, that broke up the long autumn of work, has been unofficially revived. Half-term has descended on Britain as the newest, least publicised and probably most welcome holiday of the year.

Until about 15 years ago the autumn term, the longest in the school year, was three months of unbroken slog, and mothers could look forward to washing muddy soccer shorts from Harvest Festival until Christmas, with only a long weekend off in mid-October. Union power, however, skillfully allied to specious arguments about school maintenance, changed all that. Would not a full week off give teachers the time for valuable in-service training, schools a chance to arrange their football tours and pupils the opportunity to go for their Duke of Edinburgh awards? Independent schools — which prided themselves on a holiday timetable that bore little relation to the state sector — were rapidly convinced. A unified, 10-day national holiday was born.

Half-term plays havoc with office etiquette. Proud executives, all braces, shirt-

sleeves and macho determination to leave the office last, are unusually vulnerable to the half-term pitch. "Would it be all right if I could just take this week off? It's for the kids, you know. Promised last year we'd take them to Disneyland, and I've been away so much recently..." Guilt, of course, is the deciding factor. Every top manager knows that he or she should be spending more "quality time" with their two young children. Every working mother frustrated by the hours away from home sees a welcome chance for a family get-together or a surprise trip abroad.

Half-term now is parents' national truant week. The only people left in offices are those without children. Even they are quick with implausible stories of nieces and nephews coming for a visit. The fact that so many are now on second or third marriages has brought the eastern pattern of the extended family to the heart of British office life. There are always children from this or that marriage who are home from school. The Child Support Agency could spare itself hours of expensive sleuthing by simply taking a head-count of who is supposedly away this week with the children.

Nevertheless, the holiday is not quite official — yet. It is still a secret of those who can afford an extra break in the cold days of Autumn. Better then, to argue that the entire week is a selfless devotion to parental duty, and has nothing to do with the wish to sneak away while the last rays of sun are still around.

Widening targets on gun control

From Mr D. T. Argent

Sir, The anti-gun lobby is to be congratulated on its substantial success (reports, October 15, 16; see also letters, October 17), achieved by exploiting wholly understandable emotions and ensuring that no debate has actually taken place.

The media have been only too willing to assist, it being far easier to claim the moral high ground than coolly to address the many and complex issues involved. Indeed, simply to argue that there are conflicting interests to be balanced is to run the risk of being sneered at.

As a result, a large body of utterly law-abiding sportsmen and women are to be denied a safe and enjoyable pastime (and in many cases their livelihood).

Do we really live in a society which believes, despite all the evidence, that all that is needed to stop something happening is to make it illegal?

Yours faithfully,
D. T. ARGENT,
Cobblers,
Church Street, Rudgwick,
Horsham, West Sussex,
October 17.

From Mr Kim Swain

Sir, Now that it is clear that the Government intends to enact firearms legislation in a way described by Lord Cullen as draconian (report, October 17), I would be interested to know what HM Treasury has to say. However distasteful it may seem, the Government does place a monetary value on human life.

This value, which it has told me is currently approximately £800,000, is used in economic appraisals of, for instance, road safety improvement schemes. An economic balance is sought to be struck between the cost of the works and the "savings", i.e. fewer road-traffic accident casualties.

If the Treasury assessed the compensation, redundancy and other social costs resulting from implementing the gun control proposals (say halfway between an estimate of £140 million compensation which I have seen mentioned, and £1 billion put forward by those opposed to the measures), and assuming one occurrence like the tragedy at Dunblane every nine years (the duration between Hungerford and Dunblane), over say 30 years the cost to the Exchequer might be perhaps £400 million in real terms.

The Government cannot satisfy both sides in this emotional, polarised debate. If it does press ahead with the proposals it should publicly acknowledge that this is the price it believes British society should pay. In that case these funds might no longer be available to meet other deserving social needs, such as those of the aged, sick, infirm or disadvantaged.

Yours sincerely,
KIM SWAIN,
20 Munton Oaks, Binfield, Berkshire,
October 18.

From Mrs Emma Temple

Sir, I spent the years 1976-82 as a member of a pistol club. I owned and kept at home three guns of the kind pictured in *The Times* today although I later sold them. Before I gave up shooting I belonged to two clubs and took part in competitions in London and at other clubs in England and I was able to go to Bisleigh at weekends and shoot on the public ranges.

Guns which are used a lot need constant cleaning and maintenance, and I preferred to do this quietly at home where I could take my time, rather than in a rush in the cramped gun-room at the club. I am not surprised at how few accidents there are as training and safety standards are high and all licensees are vetted.

Though I quite understand the wish of many to ban guns I am also sorry for the thousands of responsible people who will have to give up their favourite sport.

Yours faithfully,
EMMA TEMPLE,
Lower Spargate Farm,
Evercreech, Somerset,
October 17.

From Mr James Darley

Sir, Some sensible restrictions on gun ownership seem long overdue, notably to crack down on the "Dirty Harry" and "Green Beret" fantasists, elements with which I believe the majority of the sporting shooting community like myself are deeply uncomfortable.

But in banning most, or all target pistols we risk losing sight of the failure behind the Dunblane terror — the police failure. In spite of signals and internal alerts, to enforce legislation that could have prevented such a danger.

When a Cabinet minister tells us, as Michael Heseltine did last night on *Question Time*, that the new security regulations would be "rigorously enforced", we might be forgiven for a sense of *déjà-vu*. I do not believe we can count on this. The firearms knowledge of most police officers seems woefully shallow.

Next time something goes badly wrong shall we again expect the police, press and politicians to clamour for further restrictions on lawful shooting sportsmen?

Yours truly,
JAMES DARLEY,
39 Buckland Road, Buckland,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire,
October 18.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Importance of the old school tie in modern British life

From Sir Horace Phillips

Sir, If there is one area that vindicates William Rees-Mogg's dismissal of supposed predominance of class in modern British life ("Class politics is below the salt", October 14) it is surely the diplomatic service. From being in the past, and up to early this century, an elitist body in the social and educational content, it has gradually evolved as purely a meritocracy. This development owes much to Anthony Eden, mentioned by Rees-Mogg.

Eden, an Etonian, saw for himself class differences sunk in First World War trenches, where he won the Military Cross. As Foreign Secretary during the Second World War he determined that young men fighting for their country should afterwards be able to serve in the diplomatic service if they wished, whatever their origins or incomes.

His proposals were set out in a White Paper in 1943. The new criterion for admission to the service would be success in a competitive written examination and a searching assessment of personality. A candidate's school or university (if any) would not be a determining factor. He would pass or fail on the examination result.

This continues today and has led to the broadening of the service and the removal of class distinctions from it. No one in it ever judges a colleague by his social or educational background — and would certainly not make capital out of his own.

Yours faithfully,
HORACE PHILLIPS
(Diplomatic Service, 1947-77),
34a Sheridan Road,
Merton Park, SW19,
October 14.

From Mr J. E. F. Clarke

Sir, William Rees-Mogg's central point, that the "old school tie" (ie, class) is of little import in modern and thriving Britain, sounds rather wide of the mark. The senior reaches of British institutions — the City, the military, the legal and medical professions, the monarch's courtiers and advisers etc — are thronged with products from the public schools.

Mr Major seemed to have forgotten both the background and aspirations of his immediate audience. Since when have most ambitious Tory

middle-class people not striven or yearned for their children to have the demonstrable advantages of a public school?

Again, Major implied that a (humble?) grammar school education, such as he and Kenneth Clarke had, had not proved a disadvantage to their success at the commanding heights of political life. However, in spite of Clarke's and Blair's different initial schooling they share an even more potent source of widespread and assured success in modern Britain: Oxbridge, the ultimate finishing schools.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES CLARKE,
18 Oakbank,
Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey,
October 14.

From Mr A. J. Turner

Sir, Neither your columnists nor Conservative MPs have reason to criticise the Prime Minister for his "new Labour/old school tie" remark.

New Labour would make access to independent schools a privilege of the wealthy to a greater extent than for 50 years. Fees will go up if, as many people expect, Labour attacks their charitable status.

Labour would abolish the assisted places scheme, only saving sufficient money to (at best) put one extra teacher into every eight council schools. They would undermine the hard-won freedoms and better spending decisions of all state schools (grant-maintained or council-run) by handing 10 per cent of their budget back to council officers to control.

Conservatives make no bones about their support for both state and independent schools. No Conservative therefore need be ashamed or embarrassed by either his own education or his decisions about the education of his children.

The Prime Minister's remarks remind electors of Labour's belief that what is good enough for themselves and their children is too good for the children of ordinary voters.

Your obedient servant,
ANDREW TURNER
(Director, Grant Maintained
Schools Foundation),
32 New High Street,
Headington, Oxford,
October 14.

Reflection on 'Thought for the Day'

From Mr Mike Lawlor

Sir, As an ordinary man-in-the-pew of the Church of Ireland, I was taken aback at the *Thought for the Day* given by Mrs Anne Atkins on the *Today* programme on Radio 4 (letters, October 12, 16).

If our morning spiritual reflections are to consist of the trumpeting of the faults and perceived sins of other Christians, then perhaps it would be better not to have such intrusions into our only quiet and reflective time of the day, be it shaving or stuck in crawling traffic.

Could I suggest that we have a *Thought for the Day* on a Quaker model — a period of silence while we reflect on some truth or portion of scripture or Talmud or Koran. How about starting with Matthew vi. 1: "Judge not, that ye may not be judged". Mrs Atkins and all of us should reflect on this, perhaps.

Yours sincerely,
MIKE LAWLOR,
31 Carysfort Hall, Carysfort Avenue,
Blackrock, Co Dublin,
October 16.

'Burke's Peerage'

From Mr Brian Morris

Sir, Mr Peter Townsend (letter, October 11) asks why, when Mr Brooks-Baker describes himself (October 2) as Publishing Director of *Burke's Peerage*, he does not direct someone into publishing this book again.

The answer is that Mr Brooks-Baker does not own the rights to *Burke's Peerage & Baronetage* (to give it its full and correct title). I do. Mr Brooks-Baker may own the rights to the former *Burke's* series of publications — in particular the *Burke's Peerage World Book of*

From the Head of Religious Broadcasting, BBC

Sir, I am pleased to know that the Reverend Eric Shegog believes that Mrs Anne Atkins is entitled to her views on homosexuality (letter, October 12), but regret that he appears unwilling to allow her to express them on BBC radio.

Thought for the Day invites contributors to reflect on current events from the perspective of religious faith. Mrs Anne Atkins' absolutist view of scripture may be a minority view among British Christians, but she is by no means alone and she has just as much right to be heard as those other contributors who have expressed the contrary view on *Thought for the Day*.

Yours faithfully,
ERNEST REA,
Head of Religious Broadcasting,
British Broadcasting Corporation,
New Broadcasting House,
PO Box 27, Oxford Road,
Manchester M60 1S,
October 15.

Smiths, Joneses or whoever, which he is currently promoting — but that is another matter.

I bought the rights to *Burke's Peerage & Baronetage* some seven years ago. A team of editors and genealogists funded by me has been preparing a new edition since 1994. It is due for publication in the winter of 1997-98.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN MORRIS
(Managing Director),
Morris Genealogical Books,
7 Rue du Bugnon,
1299 Crans, Switzerland,
October 12.

In the risk business

From Mr Roderick S. MacDonald

Sir, If, as it may come to pass, our lives are genetically mapped out for the future, the population will be divided between those whom insurance companies wish to insure and those they do not.

Perhaps the former could conclude that a good set of genes negates the need for life insurance and, with a major slice of their cake gone, companies would suffer.

Could this be the death of life insurance?

Yours sincerely,
RODERICK S. MACDONALD,
1 Loaninghill Park,
Uphall Braxburn, West Lothian,
October 17.

Weekend Money letters, page 41

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Going, going, gone

From Mr Martin Wyness

Sir, If ever there was proof needed that Western governments can be bought, either wholly or piecemeal, you do not have to look further than New Zealand and your report "Major MP holds key to New Zealand coalition" (October 14).

In the past there has been so much to look up to in that country, particularly her gutsy stance on nuclear issues. It is sad indeed to see her reduced to the level where one politician can hold the country to ransom. The fact that this man has openly called for bidders from both likely ruling parties to buy his vote, thereby sealing victory for the party with the largest carrot, is abhorrent.

This must come as a shock for people hoping for a decent democracy in aspiring industrial countries. Welcome to market forces.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN WYNESS,
1 The Common,
Widmermere, Cumbria,
October 14.

From Mr John D. Hart

Sir, Peter Riddell says (October 12) that John Major "should be careful about attacking people from privileged backgrounds: almost three fifths of his Cabinet sitting behind him went to public schools, including three Old Etonians".

I watched the whole of the Prime Minister's speech on television and it was quite clear to me that he was not attacking such people: he was attacking those who, having enjoyed the opportunity of such an education themselves, wish to deprive other children — except their own, of course — of the chance to benefit from an "elite" education.

In this respect new Labour is following the tradition of old Labour when its ministers, themselves the products of independent or grammar schools, sought to impose the straitjacket of comprehensive education upon the whole country, with the support of the chattering classes of the time. They, of course, had the advantage of the same educational background.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN D. HART,
Hill House, Marlesford,
Wickham Market,
Woodbridge, Suffolk,
October 16.

From Mr Hugh M. Lowe

Sir, Before the election campaign really gets going, would Mr Major make at least one thing absolutely clear: does he sneer at everyone who wears an old school tie or only at Tony Blair?

Yours faithfully,
HUGH M. LOWE,
36 Fontwell Close,
Rustington, West Sussex,
October 16.

From Mr John Hobbs

Sir, Opinions may differ about the wisdom of Mr Major's reference to new Labour/old school tie, but surely no one can doubt that the Tory party is above class when he reads of Air Chief-Marshal Mogg selflessly toiling in the ranks between Charterhouse and Balliol.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HOBBS,
126 Gurney Close, Barking, Essex,
October 14.

Right to privacy

From Mr David Sagar

Sir, Lord Cranborne's assertion, (article, October 11) that Britain doesn't need a written constitution bestowing rights and freedoms because our citizens have them anyway, is put into question in one respect in your *Law Reports* of the same day. The Broadcasting Complaints Commission case confirms that there is no general right of privacy as such.

Thus many people and their families suffer because of the Government's reluctance to afford them the protection of a law which is available in other countries. Is it not time to confer a legal right of individual privacy with exceptions to protect the public interest, and with remedies in damages as well as injunctions to prevent harmful publicity in advance?

Yours faithfully,
DAVID SAGAR,
51 Cadogan Gardens, SW3,
October 12.

Practical praise

From Mrs P. A. Mills

Sir, I was amazed to read that some members of a Norfolk church are objecting to the hymn *Autumn Days* (reports, October 10 and 14). As a teacher and theology graduate I have been singing this hymn with enjoyment for years.

Why should God not be thanked for man's skill in refuelling jets in mid-air? I am quite sure that if the objectors were indeed in a mid-air emergency they would be invoking God in no uncertain manner.

Yours faithfully,
PAULINE A. MILLS,
34 Holmfild Avenue,
Stoneygate, Leicester,
October 14.

Dim view

From Mr P. M. Cullinane

Sir, If Mr Alun Morgan (letter, October 17; see also letter, October 10) were to visit Eastern Europe, he would add a bathplug to his hotel survival kit.

Old hands take two or three, of different sizes.

Yours faithfully,
P. M. CULLINANE,
9 Hilda Court,
Lovelace Road, Surbiton, Surrey,
October 17.

From Mr Reg Conlon

Sir, To increase his chances of survival I urge Mr Morgan to include a portable fire extinguisher in his hotel survival kit if he is given to plugging his own 100 watt bulb into most of the bedside lamps which ornament the rooms of the businessman's hotel.

Yours etc,
REG CONLON,
1 The Compasses, High Street,
Clapham, Bedfordshire,
October 17.

OBITUARIES

JACK ROBERTSON

Jack Robertson, Test and county cricketer, died at Bury St Edmunds on October 12 aged 79. He was born in London on February 22, 1917.

JACK ROBERTSON was as neat and stylish a batsman as he was gentle and unassuming as a person. Unfortunately for him, in his best years, just after the Second World War, England had a settled opening pair in Len Hutton and Cyril Washbrook. But for that, Robertson would surely have won more than the 11 Test caps that he did, of which only two were in England.

In almost any other county side than the Middlesex of Denis Compton and Bill Edrich, he would have been the champion batsman. While Compton was making a record 3,816 runs in the 1947 season and Edrich 3,539, Robertson's aggregate was a still imposing 2,760. And in S.M. Brown he had a determined and effective county opening partner. Between them these four Middlesex players scored an astonishing 12,193 runs in 1947, including 46 hundreds, at a collective average of 63.

Only recently rid of war, and in a marvellously sunny summer, the people of England poured to see them, especially to Lord's, to watch them on the way to winning the county championship. On Whit Monday, for example, for the then traditional match between Middlesex and Sussex, the gates were closed on a crowd of 30,000. Three years earlier, Lieutenant Robertson of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment had been batting for the Army against the Royal Air Force at Lord's when the ground was threatened by a flying bomb, approaching from the south and likely, it seemed, to fall on or near the Nursery. In the event it dropped and exploded in Regent's Park, with the players at Lord's still lying flat on the ground, heads down.

John David Benbow Robertson went to school at Arlington Park College, Turnham Green, and, with his father a stalwart of the Turnham Green club, he was never



Robertson cutting a ball from Cave of New Zealand on his way to 121 during a Test match at Lord's in 1949

short of parental encouragement to play cricket. His progress was steady rather than spectacular. He played for the Middlesex 2nd XI when he was 15, got his first chance in the championship side when he was 21 and won his county cap when he was 22, the year in which the war started.

His opening partner for Middlesex was already Sid Brown, with whom he was to share, altogether, 34 three-figure opening stands. In successive matches in June 1947, both at Lord's, they put on 310 for the first wicket against Nottinghamshire and 222 against Yorkshire, and for match after match they prepared the way for Compton and Edrich.

Robertson's style at the wicket was often compared to J.W. (young Jack) Hearne's, whose great partnerships with Patsy Hendren are so much a

part of Middlesex's cricket history. Like Hearne, Robertson made an ideal model for young batsmen, orthodox yet attractive and with all the strokes. Denis Compton always liked to be on the balcony, watching, when Jack was batting, and there could be no higher compliment than that, especially as it would have meant his tearing himself away from the shovels halfpenny board in the Middlesex dressing room.

Many of Robertson's contemporaries considered him to be at least as good a player as Washbrook. However, on his two appearances against the 1948 Australians, for the MCC and Middlesex, he was given a hard time by those two great fast bowlers, Ray Lindwall and Keith Miller, and this resulted in his being labelled as more vulnerable against speed than he really was. He regularly took runs off York-

shire, the more eagerly when Fred Trueman was playing for them. Indeed, at his best all bowlers came alike to him, and there was no county against which he failed to score a century.

He made no fewer than 12 of these in 1947, six of them in eleven innings in late July and early August; he scored 331 not out in a day against Worcestershire in 1949, and by nearly 600 runs he was the top scorer in the country in 1951, when he got 2,917 runs at an average of 56. He did it all with modesty and the minimum of effort, and as a confirmed test-taker. His concise approach was reflected in the short, quick strides with which he walked. R.W.V. Robins, his Middlesex captain in 1947, considered him — despite Robertson in those days ranking as "a Player" — to be the definition of a gentleman.

In the second and last of his

home Test matches, against New Zealand at Lord's in 1949, when Washbrook was unfit, Robertson opened with Hutton and scored 26 and 121. But he still had to make way for Washbrook in the next Test. On his two MCC tours, to the Caribbean in 1947-48 and India in 1951-52, Robertson's best Test score was 133 against West Indies at Port of Spain; in the last of his eleven Tests he scored 77 and 56 against India in Madras.

He was a tidy, occasional off-spinner, a reliable, albeit one-paced, fielder, and for ten years after his retirement an amiable coach of Middlesex. In this last capacity he was wonderfully good with the young, less so with anyone touched with cynicism. All told, Robertson scored 31,914 runs at an average of 37.50 and hit 67 centuries.

His wife Joyce, survives him, as does his son, Ian.

IVAN WALLER

Ivan Waller, mountaineer, aviator, racing motorist and engineer, died on October 2 aged 89. He was born on December 27, 1906.



A STRONG spirit of adventure ran through Ivan Waller's long and active life. On the motor racing track he proved himself a courageous competitor. As a mountaineer he ranked in his day among the boldest in Britain. His passion for the hills and cliff faces of Cumbria, Snowdonia and the Scottish Highlands never diminished.

His technical skill and unflinching style were admired and his sense of fun, though it irritated the more solemn members of the climbing fraternity, was greatly enjoyed by others. In 1927 his lead of Belle Vue Bastion, a bulging stretch of rock on the Terrace Wall of Tryfan, was a breakthrough made more remarkable by his solo ascent of the route two days later to musical accompaniment from a gramophone — playing Ragtime — pre-placed on the ledge above. He ended the day with a handstand on the Adam and Eve rocks on Tryfan's summit.

As a schoolboy at Lancing, Ivan Mark Waller showed scarcely a flicker of interest in conventional sports. Rather it was his skill as an engineer which was to reveal itself when, in the school's workshop, he produced a working example of a .22 pistol. This was briefly admired and then confiscated by the Shoreham magistrates.

At Trinity College, Cambridge, he studied engineering sciences and, after graduation, joined Rolls-Royce in Derby. It was then that his enthusiasm for motor racing and mountaineering began to develop.

He proved himself a fearless competitor at Brooklands and in his racing Alvis he won the Irish Motor Club's premier event in 1932 at Phoenix Park. He manifested a similarly dauntless spirit as a rock climber and was to partner many of the more famous "tigers" of the day, among them Colin Kirkus, Menlove Edwards, Maurice Linnell and Jack Longland.

When the Second World War broke out, Waller was frustrated at being in a reserved occupation. He transferred to the aeronautical division of Rolls-Royce, qualified as a pilot, and became one of the company's flight test engineers.

In the winter of 1941 Waller was testing an experimental seaplane, the Blackburn B20, powered by Rolls-Royce Vulture engines. Taking off from a base on the Clyde, an envelope containing secret signals identifying the B20 as an allied aircraft was dropped irretrievably into a maze of pipes and wires in the aircraft's belly. This made it vulnerable to friendly anti-aircraft fire, a risk soon forgotten when, during a high speed test run, the aircraft started to break up.

As Waller stood ready to bale out, his parachute opened prematurely and became entangled in an aerial wire. He freed it, only to find that the canopy was wrapping itself around the aircraft's tail. Rock climbing skills came to his aid as he hauled himself out onto the fuselage and hand-traversed along the aerial wire to the tail. But the slipstream of the plunging aircraft was too great and he and the badly torn parachute were plucked free. He hit the sea with some force but survived, unlike the pilot and five crew.

After the war Waller rejoined the car division of Rolls-

Royce and became senior test and development engineer. His work led to a paper on internally expanding shoe brakes which won the Stephenson Award of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

Waller's interest in motor racing and rock climbing remained as strong as ever and he would occasionally appear in North Wales in a Rolls-Royce limousine under test. At the age of 46 he drove a Jaguar XK 120 at Le Mans, the first privately entered car to finish behind the winning works teams. Waller took the wheel for 18 of the 24 hours and during the night, on a wet track, was putting in the fastest lap times.

He retired to live in the Lake District and devoted himself to long distance walking and skiing. He walked the Pennine Way in both directions, climbed all the mountains over 3,000ft in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. At the age of 70 he made two traverses of the gruelling Cullin Ridge on Skye. The first traverse was to make sure of the route for the second, three weeks later, which he made in the company of a 71-year-old friend. He rounded off a remarkable climbing career at the age of 79 when he repeated his famous Belle Vue Bastion ascent with old rope but without gramophone accompaniment.

Waller leaves his widow, Helen, and two sons.

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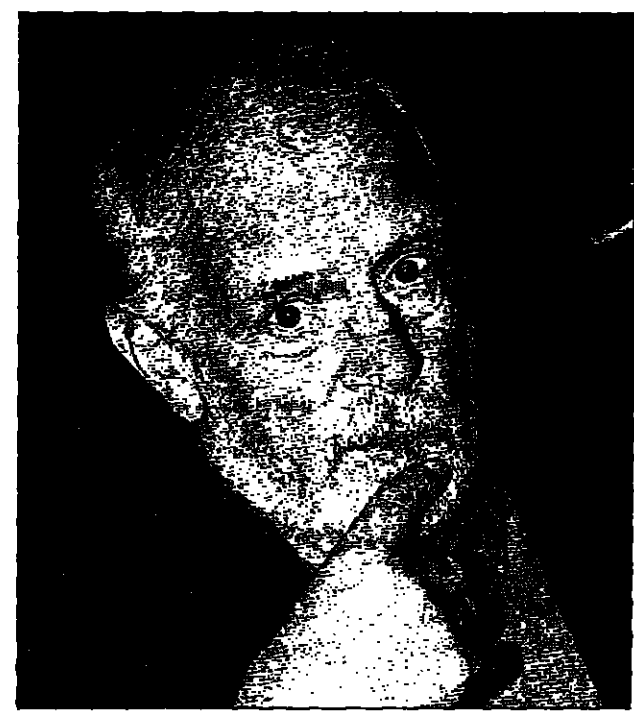
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HELMUT HEISENBÜTTEL

Helmut Heisenbüttel,
German writer, died on
September 19 aged 75. He
was born on June 21, 1921.



FOR almost 40 years Helmut Heisenbüttel espoused an extreme literary modernism that by the end of his career had come to seem rather old-fashioned. Literature, he believed, could have only one real subject, and that was language itself. In a large body of work which resisted classification into any of the familiar genres — he himself preferred talk of "texts" and "projects," rather than "poetry" or "theory" or "prose" — Heisenbüttel attempted to penetrate language and lay bare its hidden workings, testing to the limit our ability to grasp the world through words.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, he was never a popular writer. But he was esteemed by critics and fellow writers in Germany and elsewhere, and for a time in the 1960s and 1970s the experimental tendencies he embodied seemed an important part of literary life. His works were translated into English and other languages (though they were no easier to translate than to classify), and he was honoured with some of the German-speaking world's most coveted literary awards.

The son of a bailiff, Helmut Heisenbüttel was born in Rühringen near Wilhelmshaven. In the course of military service during the Second World War he was severely wounded, losing his left arm in 1941, after which he took no

further part in the fighting. From 1942 to 1955 he studied at the universities of Dresden, Leipzig and Hamburg, reading first architecture, then German literature and art history. On finishing his studies, he spent two years working in advertising in Hamburg, before moving to Stuttgart to join the staff of South West German Radio, where in 1959 he succeeded the novelist Alfred Andersch as head of the "Radio-Essay" department, and where he remained until his retirement in 1981.

Heisenbüttel began to write at the age of 15, but his

tax, and relied instead on techniques such as collage, quotation and juxtaposition. These methods were developed and elaborated to a daunting degree in the complex perspectives of *D'Alembert's Ende* (1970), an extended fiction that was the nearest Heisenbüttel came to writing a novel.

But Heisenbüttel's approach to language was always less purely playful than that of some of his contemporaries and associates, such as the Austrians Ernst Jandl and Friederike Mayröcker. What fascinated him about words was their role in human society, so that his linguistic games and experiments, far from becoming an end in themselves, are often turned to sharply satirical purpose.

Heisenbüttel was fortunate to be able to spend his working life in a job that provided a focus and forum for his literary and artistic interests: as editor in charge of the influential "Radio-Essay" programme strand at South West German Radio, he commissioned and collaborated on talks, readings and performances by many of the most significant avant-garde figures of the day. He was also a perceptive and rigorous critic, not only of literature but of the visual arts. The range of his contacts, and the depth of their affection for him, was evident in the volume of tributes presented to him on his seventieth birthday in 1991.

Helmut Heisenbüttel is survived by his wife Ida, whom he married in 1954, and by a son and three daughters.

first published works date from the early 1950s. Collected in two volumes — *Kombinationen* (1954) and *Topographien* (1956) — these early pieces present a view of the world that is fragmented, contradictory and incomplete, but still unmistakably lyrical in inspiration and intent; this is writing that belongs to a recognisable poetic tradition.

From the 1960s onwards, however, in works such as those collected into a series of numbered *Textbücher*, Heisenbüttel moved much further away from what he saw as the arbitrary hierarchies of conventional grammar and syn-

tax, and relied instead on techniques such as collage, quotation and juxtaposition. These methods were developed and elaborated to a daunting degree in the complex perspectives of *D'Alembert's Ende* (1970), an extended fiction that was the nearest Heisenbüttel came to writing a novel.

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THE CLOSING OF WEMBLEY. LIQUIDATION PLANS.

The following statement was issued officially at the British Empire Exhibition on Saturday: In view of the fact that there is no intention to continue the British Empire Exhibition next year, it has been decided to take the usual and obvious course in the case of temporary associations of placing the Exhibition in the charge of liquidators as early as possible after its close on October 31, for the purpose of realizing the assets and discharging the liabilities of the Exhibition. It has accordingly been arranged to hold extraordinary general meetings of the British Empire Exhibition Association on Monday, October 26, and on Tuesday, November 10, to appoint liquidators. An official statement that the appointment of liquidators was merely a formal proceeding, demanded by company law. The British Empire Exhibition must obviously sooner or later be wound up. Formal authority was necessary for the appointment of those who were to be entrusted with that gigantic task. Some weeks ago a Realization Committee, consisting of Mr. J. H. Thomas (chairman), Sir James Cooper (the Financial Controller of the Exhibition), and Sir Arthur Whitney, with

ON THIS DAY
October 19, 1925

The close of the highly-successful British Empire Exhibition of 1924-25 — there was a total "gate" of 1,500,000 — was to be followed by the staging of many famous sporting events at Wembley over the years

Mr. H.A. Beckenham (the present secretary of the Exhibition), as secretary, was appointed to go into the future of Wembley and, if called upon, to act as liquidators. While they were given by the Executive Council very wide powers, they were not actually appointed as final liquidators, but it is understood that it is not improbable that they will be asked by the Executive Council to undertake that responsibility.

The Government Committee met on Saturday at the Department of Overseas Trade and came to a decision to run the Tatoo for three performances, after Saturday, October 24. The days selected are Wednesday, Thurs-

day, and Saturday, October 28, 29, and 31. At the end of the month the Tatoo will have reached its tenth week, and both men and horses need a rest after the continuous strain of over three months' rehearsals and performances. The extra five weeks' running of the Tatoo has involved the postponement of the men's furlough.

The three days selected are chosen because they are half-holidays and afford the chance of easy and comfortable attendance to the greatest number. The special trains from districts outside London will be arranged accordingly. The total number of visitors to date is 1,630,000, and by Wednesday it should exceed a million and three-quarters. The Tatoo numbers have already produced £170,000 at the Exhibition turnstiles, and the Stadium receipts approach £170,000 net.

The ceremony which will bring the Exhibition to an end on October 31 will be performed by the Duke and Duchess of York and will begin at 3 p.m. The programme will include the last performance of the Tatoo, which will start at 7 o'clock instead of 8. This will be followed by a musical programme by the massed bands of the Brigade of Guards, and a big fireworks display. The bands will play patriotic and popular airs, winding up with "Auld Lang Syne".

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